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ABSTRACT

The Chicago School Reform, adopted in December 1988, requires the school system to raise its student achievement levels to national norms in 5 years; to reallocate the system's resources away from the administration and toward schools, particularly those with high enrollments of economically disadvantaged students; and to establish Local School Councils (LSCs) as the basis for school-based management. On the basis of an ongoing intensive study of 14 Chicago schools and other investigations, the following midway conclusions are stated: (1) LSCs have been established and, for the most part, function successfully; (2) school improvement plans have focused more on "add-ons" than on altering the regular instructional programs of schools; (3) principals have adopted new roles and are providing new leadership; (4) teachers have become increasingly involved and positive about reform; (5) resources have been increasingly focused on the schools, with the greatest increases in schools enrolling the highest proportions of disadvantaged students; (6) national school improvement efforts are working in Chicago to assist many schools; and (7) it is still too early to see any changes in student achievement. The appendix lists the schools involved in major school improvement networks and the common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools. (50 references) (MLF)

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School Restructuring,

Chicago Style

A Midway Report

February 28, 1992

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Executive Director

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SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING, CHICAGO STYLE
A Midway Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School reform in the Chicago Public Schools was launched with the signing of the Chicago School Reform Act (P.L. 85-1418) in December of 1988. The focus of the act was on the five year period from September 1989 to June 1994. We are now midway through that reform period. This report tries to assess the state of reform in Chicago at that midpoint.

Reform was launched with the appointment of an Interim Board in May of 1989. The Interim Board quickly extended employee contracts and reallocated the budget to move $40 million to the school level while cutting about 500 administrative positions. Local school councils were elected in October 1989 with more than 300,000 votes cast for more than 17,000 candidates for the roughly 6,000 spots on these LSCs. Later that same year the Interim Board signed employee contracts which granted seven percent raises plus a number of bonuses in each of the succeeding three years. With the granting of these contracts, the Board faced budget deficits in excess of $200 million before schools could open in September 1991 and 1992. During the second year of reform implementation, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled the reform act was unconstitutional, requiring corrective legislation in both January and July of 1991 to enable the reform effort to continue. A second round of LSC elections was held in October 1991 and new councils were then empaneled.

Real Reform: Change at the School Level

Chicago's reform effort has frequently been characterized as a change in governance, but that change was intended to provide the opportunity for changes in the educational programs in schools to take place. There are exciting instances of such changes, but more schools need to be focused in that direction. On the basis of an on-going intensive study of 14 Chicago schools and other investigations, the Panel has found:

1. LSCs have been established and, for the most part, function successfully.

LSCs were elected at all regular schools in October 1989. Despite initial chaos concerning a place to meet and early expenditure decisions, they successfully adopted school improvement plans and local school budgets; they evaluated principals and selected their leadership for the next four years. At 38 percent of Chicago schools, a new principal now is in place. LSC attendance varies from school to school but overall was at about 70 percent, with principals attending most frequently. LSC Chairs and teacher representatives had attendance rates above 80 percent, while community representatives and parents other than the Chair were nearer 60 percent. Although LSCs spent nearly a third of their agendas on organizational matters, they also devoted a third of their topics to dimensions of the school program. Building, finance, and personnel (primarily principal selection) items dominated the remainder of their discussions.

2. School Improvement Plans have focused more on "add-ons" than on altering the regular instructional programs of schools.

In the first year of school improvement planning, most schools focused on solving practical problems like overcrowding, discipline in the school, controlling gangs, and increasing attendance. About a quarter of the observed schools planned quite significant changes in their instructional programs while another quarter approved very rudimentary plans. An analysis of the revised plans adopted in the second year showed curricular changes were most prevalent, pedagogical improvements next most frequent, and organizational and other changes following. About a quarter of the studied schools were attempting changes which would impact regular classroom instruction throughout the school, while another quarter were planning changes in some classrooms. More frequently, schools were favoring "add-on" programs such as additional classes (art, music, science or computer labs) and additional instruction (after-school, pre-school, or summer school). Most add-ons can be implemented easily if money and new staff are available. Initiatives that may affect the regular classroom experiences of students require significant commitment and time on the part of teachers. One school is emblematic of efforts to change regular classroom instruction. It is implementing Socratic seminars in an attempt to improve the content and intellectual level of classroom discussion; a literature-based reading program; extensive use of hands-on learning in mathematics; an experimental approach to science; and an innovative schoolwide writing program.

3. Principals have adopted new roles and are providing new leadership.

As mentioned above, 38 percent of Chicago schools are now led by a principal who was not in that position when reform began. A similar percentage of schools in the Panel's study are now served by new principals. The selection process went smoothly in some schools, but others had a more difficult time in keeping their incumbent evaluation process objective and separate from the launching of a search for a new candidate. In some schools, the principal selection process so dominated their agendas that they could not adequately conduct other business such as revising their improvement plans or adopting a school budget. Principals during the initial years of reform found that time demands were excessive. They found themselves playing new roles, not all of which seemed appropriate. One principal complained that she now had to be a PR figure, a referee between factions in her school, and a glorified clerk making lots of reports. But some principals also saw the reform effort as providing more opportunities, particularly relative to staff selection and to the additional support they receive from more involved LSC members, parents, and teachers.

4. Teachers have become increasingly involved and positive about reform.

Based on two surveys and interviews with a series of key school-level teacher leaders, it appears that teachers may now be quite active in reform efforts at most schools. A small survey taken before the first LSC elections showed that teachers did not see themselves becoming extensively involved in reform. They thought increased parent involvement was the primary strength of the reform effort but worried that such involvement might lead to greater classroom interference. The much more comprehensive survey of 13,000 elementary school teachers, taken in the spring of 1991 (*Charting Reform: The Teachers' Turn*), showed a majority of teachers responded positively to questions about school reform. In 62 schools teachers were very positive about reform, while in another 241 they were moderately positive. In 89 schools, teachers were somewhat negative while in 9 schools, they were very negative. Teachers felt they were fairly represented on LSCs, that they had increased involvement in policy making, and they were involved in implementing their school improvement plans. Interviews in the 14 study schools indicated that teachers had a major role in determining their schools' improvement plan, which was generally accepted as proposed by the LSC. Although the survey indicated teachers were mildly optimistic that their schools will improve, fewer than half indicated their own instructional practices have changed or will change in the future.

5. Resources have been increasingly focused on the schools, with the greatest increases in schools enrolling the highest proportions of disadvantaged students.

Between the 1988-89 school year, when the reform law was being enacted, and 1991-92, the Chicago Public Schools increased revenues by $403 million, mostly from increased local property tax receipts (state aid increased by only $25 million). Most of this money was reallocated to schools (primarily through State Chapter I) while some 840 administrative unit positions were eliminated. At the same time, school staff have increased by 3,365. In half of those positions, schools hired classroom aides; schools also added just over 1,000 teachers and other professional staff. Funds have been much more equitably allocated to schools. In the year before school reform began, elementary schools with 90 to 99 percent low income students averaged $500 less per pupil in expenditures than did schools with fewer than 30 percent low income. In 1991-92, the schools with the heaviest concentrations of low income students have nearly $1,000 more per pupil than do those with the fewest disadvantaged pupils. The average elementary school had $340,000 in supplemental discretionary funds. Supplemental funds in the average high school amounted to $478,000.

6. National school improvement efforts have "marched on Chicago" to assist many schools.

In 1988, there were few national school improvement efforts working in Chicago schools. In 1992, there are more than 170 schools listed under various national reform efforts now working in Chicago (See Appendix, page 49). While some of these efforts have a distinctly Chicago flavor (Paideia, the Illinois Writing Project, and the federally supported desegregation program Project CANAL), others are products of major school reformers such as Ted Sizer (Coalition of Essential Schools), Hank Levin (Accelerated Schools Network), and James Comer (Comer School Development Program). These national efforts are providing valuable resources to schools and school staffs as they work to improve Chicago's schools. Many are supported by grants from Chicago's major foundations and corporations. These efforts were largely unavailable to the city's schools prior to school reform.

7. It is still too early to see any changes in student achievement.

The school reform effort in Chicago, while now at the midway point in the initial focus period, has had little opportunity yet to manifest itself in improved student achievement. The first year of the reform effort was designed to establish Local School Councils at every school and to develop improvement plans with supporting school budgets. Most schools did not begin to implement changes until the second year; but during that year, half the schools were still involved in the process of evaluating their incumbent principals and making leadership decisions for the next four years. The most recent achievement tests were taken only eight months into that second year, and should not have been expected to show any significant changes, and did not show any. Other measures, such as dropout rates, continue to reflect prior years of neglect, with most students who have experienced major changes under reform still several years from graduation. Attendance rates for the city remain flat or, at the high school level, have declined slightly.

8. The Midway Summary: School Reform is successfully launched; some schools are beginning to change in significant ways; many more need to follow their lead.

Despite the chaos created by fiscal mismanagement, the major elements of the Chicago School Reform Act have been successfully established. Local School Councils are functioning in almost every Chicago school. Nearly 12,000 people are present during discussions of school concerns each month of the school year. In some schools, important efforts are underway to change the way in which instruction is carried on in regular classrooms. In other schools, important practical problems have been addressed and new programs have been added to meet the special needs of some students. In some schools, little of significance has occurred. If student achievement is to improve measurably, the Panel believes more schools must turn their attention to changing the ways in which regular students and teachers interact in the majority of the city's classrooms.

SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING, CHICAGO STYLE:
A Midway Report

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The Chicago Public Schools are the focus of one of the most radical school reform efforts in the United States. Only the statewide reform efforts in Kentucky rival the comprehensiveness of the Chicago reforms.[1] The Chicago reforms, adopted in December of 1988 (P.A. 85-1418), require the school system to raise its student achievement levels to national norms in five years, to reallocate the system's resources away from the administration and towards schools, particularly those with high enrollments of economically disadvantaged students, and to establish Local School Councils as the basis for school-based management. The legislatively mandated reform act focused on an initial five year implementation period.[2] This report is an assessment of the implementation of the act as the mid-point in that five year period approaches.

The reform act required changes in two distinct levels of the school system. One set of changes affects the way the system, as a whole, is to operate; the second set affects the operations of individual schools. Thus, the Chicago School Reform Act is an attempt to restructure a whole school system, by radically altering its governance structure. Thereby, it is hoped, individual schools will enter into a restructuring which will provide a more appropriate, and therefore more successful, educational program for their enrolled students. Following the design of the act, this report briefly describes changes in the system as a whole and then examines more carefully changes in a sample of schools.

I. Major Events in the Chronology of Reform

In the reports of the news media, reform in Chicago has been chronicled primarily through the events affecting the whole system. Thus, what most Chicagoans and most national observers know about school reform is shaped by the actions of the Board of Education, the general superintendent, the state legislature, the state supreme court, and the various reform groups and activists who had a major hand in designing the reform act.

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[1] For a comparison of major restructuring reform efforts across the nation and their early implementation, see G. Alfred Hess, Jr. (Ed.), *Empowering Teachers and Parents: School Restructuring Through the Eyes of Anthropologists*, Bergin & Garvey, New York, forthcoming, August 1992.

[2] For a fuller description of the reform act, the background and social movement that led to its adoption, and the early implementation efforts, see G. Alfred Hess, Jr., *School Restructuring, Chicago Style*, Corwin Press, Newbury Park, CA, 1991.

These events have had a major impact on reform in Chicago, but are only a part of the total story. The more important part of the story, what is happening at the local school level, is much less visible, and therefore much less reported.

A. The Interim Board of Education

The school reform implementation process began with the mayoral appointment of a seven member Interim Board of Education in May, 1989. The Interim Board set an agenda for itself which included five "miracles": 1) reallocating the budget, 2) extending current employee contracts, 3) hiring a new superintendent, 4) establishing the new Local School Councils, and 5) adopting a reform plan (Chicago Panel, October, 1989). In its first meeting, the Interim Board rejected the tentative budget and tentative reform plan presented by the carry-over general superintendent (see Hess, 1991a for a more extended account of the early implementation of school reform in Chicago).

During the next five months, the board accomplished four of its five miracles. It adopted a new budget which cut nearly 500 positions out of its administrative units and reallocated $40 million to schools (an average of $90,000 in new discretionary funds available at each elementary school). The board extended its contracts with its employee groups and included in those contracts key provisions included in the reform legislation (e.g., principals may now select teachers for new or vacant positions based on merit, not seniority, and school faculties may vote to waive particular contract restrictions). The board hired a new general superintendent. It supervised the first round of Local School Council (LSC) elections, in which 313,000 voters elected 5,420 parent, community representative, and teacher members to join *ex officio* principals (who vote on most matters) on the eleven member LSCs. The Interim Board failed to adopt an acceptable plan of reform until well into the second year of reform implementation (Chicago Panel, October, 1989; *Chicago Tribune*, August 15, 1990).

The last 12 months of the Interim Board's 17 month tenure proved to be much less successful. The seeds of discord were sown during this period. Some of the discord had emerged during the budget reallocation process when several black and Hispanic community groups blasted the board for reversing affirmative action gains since many of the persons laid off from the administrative units were black or Hispanic (*Chicago Sun Times*, August 24, 1989). The racial polarization around the staff reductions extended into the process established under the reform act to lead to the selection of a permanent Board of Education. A Nominating Commission was established composed of 23 representatives of Local School Councils selected from the 11 sub-district councils and five members appointed by the mayor. The Nominating Commission presented the mayor with 15 slates of nominees so structured that the mayor (a white who had defeated two black candidates in elections held after the reform act had become law) would be forced to appoint nine blacks to the 15 member permanent board. The mayor rejected eight of the slates, and after negotiating with the commission, eventually ended up with new slates presented to him which allowed

a permanent board to be empaneled in November 1990 which included seven blacks, three Hispanics, three whites, an Asian-American and an Arab-American (*Chicago Tribune*, September 1, 1990). However, the drawn out confrontation meant the Interim Board's tenure extended five months beyond its intended one year term.

The selection of principals at the system's 542 schools was also caught up in the racial polarization affecting both mayoral politics and school reform at the initiation of the Chicago restructuring effort. This was one of the few matters focused in individual schools which were closely monitored by the news media (the LSC election was the other major such item). During the first year of reform implementation, half of the system's schools were to evaluate their incumbent principals and to decide whether to offer them a new four year performance based contract or select a new principal. The second half of the schools would undertake the same process during the second year of reform.[3] The daily media gave extensive coverage to individual schools caught up in contentious decisions to replace the incumbent (*Chicago Sun Times*, February 20, 1990). Frequently, the schools portrayed in the press were schools with predominantly minority populations that were dismissing white principals. During the first year of reform implementation, 276 schools were involved in principal selection. At 150 of those schools, new principals were installed as a result of retirements (about 80), creation of new school units with their own principals (about 50 former branch schools became independent under reform), or dismissal of the incumbent. However, when Designs for Change examined principal selection at all schools, they found no discernible pattern of racial or ethnic bias in principal dismissals (Andreoli, 1990). In fact, Hispanic incumbents or interim principals were proportionately most frequently not retained by LSCs (*Chicago Sun Times*, March 28, 1990). There was a tendency for newly selected principals to more closely match the racial/ethnic enrollment in their schools. By the end of the second year of principal selection, 38 percent of all Chicago schools were being led by educational leaders who had not been principals at those schools prior to the passage of the Chicago School Reform Act. That is a significant turn-over in local educational leadership.

A third arena of eventual discord was the matter of employee contracts. As noted above, the Interim Board quickly moved to extend contracts with the school system's employee groups and to include in the extensions new provisions which matched new requirements under the reform act. In exchange for bringing contracts into line with the reform act, the Interim Board granted 5.4 percent raises (*Chicago Tribune*, July 27, 1989). The contract being extended had called for four percent increases in each of the previous two years. With this contract settlement, the board began a process of fiscally irresponsible decision-making which culminated, two years later, in a major fiscal debacle from which the permanent board has not been able to extricate itself (Chicago Panel, Fall 1991).

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[3] See Hess, 1991a for a further description of changes in the roles of principals and teachers under the Chicago School Reform Act.

During the 1989-90 school year, the Chicago Board of Education received a one-time revenue bubble which resulted from increased tax revenues from property reassessments which would not be reflected in decreased state distributive aid until the next fiscal year. Instead of dedicating the $40 million revenue bubble to one time, non-recurring expenditures, such as capital costs to relieve overcrowding, the interim board used the revenue blip to provide higher salaries which would drive up the base level of all future compensation costs.

However, it was the employee contracts signed in the ensuing year which would really undermine the system's future fiscal stability. During the summer of 1990, the interim board announced a contract settlement which would guarantee a timely opening of schools for the third consecutive year (*Chicago Tribune*, July 31, 1990). The settlement covered a three year contract which included pay increases of seven percent for each year. In order to fund the first year of the pay raises, the board sought permission from the state legislature to divert a third of its payments into the employee pension funds for use in paying salaries (*Chicago Tribune*, June 30, and August 19, 1990). Due to conflicts over legislative technicalities, the raises did not actually go into effect until November of 1990, reducing the effective raises to 5.6 percent in the first year (*Chicago Tribune*, December 1, 1990a). In addition to the raid on the pension fund, the raises were supported by staff cuts enacted during the spring of the previous school year, leaving the system with a $139 million fund balance to carry into the first year of the new contract (Chicago Panel, October, 1990). Neither of these resources would be available to fund the increased costs of the second and third years of the contract. Questioned at a public hearing, the board's vice-president admitted the contract would create a budget deficit for the second year of $200 - $400 million (Chicago Panel, Fall 1991).

The final arena of discord was the interim board's relationship to the administrative staff. During its initial months, the interim board designed the 500 staff cuts it would include in its initial budget through use of a temporary task force on the budget. Shortly thereafter it dismissed the current superintendent and entered into a five month interregnum under a powerless interim superintendent. During this period, the interim board established a pattern of micro-managing the system, providing little clear administrative direction and then second-guessing the actions of top administrators (Chicago Panel, January, 1990). The situation continued after the appointment of a permanent superintendent who provided little additional administrative focus. As the reform effort entered its third school year, the basic functions of the administration had not been redesigned, though staff had been cut by nearly 800 positions. Instead, a separate Reform Implementation unit had been created while other departments were expected to continue providing previous services, though now with many fewer staff. There has been an almost complete replacement of top administrative leadership, with several key appointments being given to patronage workers out of the mayor's or his allies' camps. The final year of the interim board's tenure provided few accomplishments of which its members can be proud.

B. The Second Year

The new general superintendent declared that the second year of school reform would be focused on the local school. Many reform groups warmly agreed that it was time to shift focus away from issues of governance and to concentrate on changes which would more directly impact student learning. Unfortunately, both the superintendent and the reform groups were to be disappointed.

Shortly after the new permanent board of education took office, the Illinois Supreme Court, ruling on a suit brought by principals (Fumarolo, *et al.* vs. Chicago Board of Education), declared the Chicago School Reform Act to be unconstitutional because it established Local School Councils through a process which violated the principle of one person-one vote (*Chicago Tribune*, December 1, 1990b). The defense strategy mounted by the interim board was to claim the LSCs were not very significant, and so should not be held to strict scrutiny under the equal protection clause of the constitution. Since that defense would have emasculated any further efforts to empower LSCs, many reformers were happier to have lost the suit. But the Court's decision required an immediate legislative remedy. Some reform groups attempted to fashion a "quickie" solution which would keep reform on track, but members of black community groups interested in improving the public schools, now organized as a coalition called the African-American Educational Reform Institute, proposed an alternative solution and prevented anything but a temporary fix from passing the legislature in January of 1991 (*Chicago Tribune*, January 9, 1991). During the next seven months, there were many long debates about an ultimate solution to the voting mechanism to select LSC members and about other needed amendments to the reform act. Finally, in July 1991, two bills were adopted (Senate Bills 10 and 11) which created a new election process and made several other changes in the reform act (*Chicago Sun Times*, September 12, 1991). The long debated amendment process dominated citywide reform interests, preventing a greater focus on local school change. However, a major benefit of this debate is that black community groups were reestablished as having a legitimate and positive voice in setting the reform agenda. Finally, the racial polarization which had been so dominant during the first year of reform began to wane.

But before the amendments could even be adopted by the General Assembly, a new discordant note was heard. On May 1, 1991, a month after the conclusion of the reelection campaign of Mayor Richard Daley, the general superintendent and the president of the Board of Education announced that the school system was facing a $315 million deficit for the following year (*Chicago Tribune*, May 2, 1991). Since the Chicago Public Schools, by law, cannot open without a balanced budget, a new frenetic period began.

The new permanent board had been warned of its impending deficit in December of 1990 during its initial self-designed training. The Board had been urged to begin trying to erase the deficit and to engage the public in solving the problem (Chicago Panel, October, 1990). The general superintendent was similarly urged to make the public aware of the impending deficit. In a fairly obvious political decision, the superintendent and board

decided to keep the board's fiscal plight out of either the fall gubernatorial or winter mayoral campaigns. Thus, the key politicians who might have been pressured to promise to help solve the board's problem were allowed to win election without making any such commitments. Neither the governor nor the mayor were to provide any significant assistance in the board's struggle to balance its budget in time to open schools in September, 1991.

Instead, LSCs were encouraged to go through the budget planning process for the next year without any idea that major cuts would be forthcoming (Chicago Panel, Fall 1991). The board would attempt to delay implementation of further budget reallocations and thereby deprive schools with high numbers of disadvantaged students of the discretionary funds for which they had already devised improvement plans.[4] The board sought to frighten both black and Hispanic parents into supporting its legislative proposals by threatening to close under utilized schools in black neighborhoods and refusing to renew leases to relieve overcrowding in Hispanic neighborhoods (Chicago Panel, Summer 1991). Instead, both groups of parents joined forces to protest such proposals, which were soundly defeated in open board meetings (*Chicago Sun Times*, July 27, 1991).

During the winter of 1991, at the invitation of the MacArthur Foundation, a group of leaders of various reform groups met with the general superintendent and several of his advisors from the business community to open lines of dialogue which had become strained during his first year on the job. Early in this group's existence, the issue of the impending deficit was raised and budget discussions were scheduled and then repeatedly delayed at the request of the superintendent. When the May 1st deficit announcement was made, this group sought to find ways to assist the superintendent and the board to devise a budget balancing solution which would minimize cuts affecting students and thus would be acceptable to the reform groups. Several of the organizations provided the superintendent and the board with alternative solutions[5] and the group devised a consensus option, which was totally rejected by the superintendent (*Chicago Tribune*, June 25, 1991). With this breakdown in cooperation and dialogue, a summer of controversy ensued. The board's legislative proposals were overwhelmingly defeated in the face of united opposition by the reform groups (*Chicago Sun Times*, June 30, 1991). Some additional revenues were forthcoming, as predicted by the reform groups. Finally the board adopted a series of

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[4] Ultimately, the board's legislative proposal to recapture the State Chapter I funds being reallocated to serve low income students was defeated in the Illinois House of Representatives by more than 100 votes.

[5] Memos were sent from Leadership for Quality Education (detailing potential administrative cuts to achieve savings of some $40 million) and the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance (outlining a reorganization of the administration along the lines of that adopted in San Diego earlier in 1991 with a similar projected savings).

budget cuts, including the elimination of reading improvement programs at the system's 50 lowest performing schools, which brought the budget into balance. These cuts included the last minute closing of seven schools and necessitated a great deal of internal reassignment of teachers and students (*Chicago Sun Times*, August 31, 1991).

C. The Third Year

Thus, the third year of reform implementation was launched in September of 1991 amid great chaos. For days, principals found themselves scrambling to find enough teachers to cover their classes, losing faculty members they had come to depend upon, and finding new teachers showing up on their doorstep with different qualifications and capacities (*Chicago Sun Times*, September 11, 1991). Carefully designed school improvement plans were scuttled in the raw effort to match teachers, students, and classrooms. Regular supplies and educational equipment funds were cut by 90 percent. Union employees were summarily dismissed and then restored when the board's attempted cuts were found to violate employee contracts (*Chicago Tribune*, September 23, 1991). The projected seven percent raises in the second year of the contract, in line with contingency language included in the contract, were eliminated. In response, the teachers union demanded new negotiations and ultimately threatened to void the current contract and go on strike (*Chicago Sun Times*, October 16, 1991).

Amid this chaos, the second set of Local School Council elections were scheduled to be held. Despite the grave fears of many, most schools found enough candidates to run for open LSC seats, and in most schools the elections were contested for all seats (Designs for Change, 1991). Voter turnout was 165,000, only half that in 1989. But by the beginning of November, the new councils were installed and the school year was beginning to settle down, though the threat of a teacher strike still hung over the system's head. An agreement was finally reached in mid-November that raised base teacher salaries by three percent for 1991-92 and guaranteed a seven percent increase in 1992-93. Including the costs of this agreement, the Board's projected deficit for 1992-93 then stood at $278 million. The budget must be balanced before schools can open in September.

II. The Real Reform -- Change at the School Level

But for all the coverage extended to systemwide and state level activities, the heart of school reform efforts in Chicago is at the local school level. The restructuring of the Chicago school system is simply to enable and encourage school level change. The Reform Act itself sets forth a set of ten goals which may be characterized as assuring that Chicago students achieve at levels comparable to those of the national averages. The act then states:

To achieve these priority goals, the General Assembly intends to make the

individual local school the essential unit for educational governance and improvement and to establish a process for placing the primary responsibility for school governance and improvement in furtherance of such goals in the hands of parents, community residents, teachers, and the school principal at the school level (P.A. 85-1418, Sec 34.1.01B).

To study the changes occurring under the reform effort, the Chicago Panel established a major, five year project, *Monitoring and Researching School Reform in Chicago*. This project includes both systemwide quantitative approaches and a more intensive participant observation study in 14 representative schools. Together, the schools in this sample enroll students who are similar in most characteristics to students across the city in terms of race and ethnicity, proportion of low income students, and geographical spread. There are four high schools and ten elementary schools in the sample. Over two years, Panel staff observed more than 250 Local School Council meetings, interviewed all principals, LSC chairs, and chairs of the Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC, an organization of teachers in each school created by the reform act). The project has already produced a number of smaller reports (e.g., Easton & Storey, 1990; Easton, *et al.*, 1991; Ford, 1991; and Hess, 1991b) which provide the basis for the following summary.[6]

A. The First LSCs -- Learning to Govern

Under the Chicago School Reform Act, Local School Councils were to become the primary site of school governance in Chicago. There has been considerable disagreement in the city, however, about what that entails. In addition, there are some, both within the school system and outside it, who believe this central aspect of the Chicago School Reform Act is a fundamental error which should be undermined, if not reversed. Thus, the first two years of school reform could be described as a time of informal negotiations about how much authority Local School Councils now have and how much authority the central board and administration retain. These negotiations have not been conducted in comfortable conference rooms with representatives of the contestants gathered around tables. These negotiations have taken place in decisions of councils and of the board, in memos from the superintendent and in court decisions.

The contract and budget decisions of the central board and their effect upon LSCs and their improvement plans and budgets has already been noted. There were two other

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[6] The following staff have participated significantly in the school reform monitoring project and provided most of the data incorporated in this report: John Q. Easton, Jesse Qualls, Sandra L. Storey, Cheryl Johnson, Darryl Ford, Susan Ryan, Susan Flinspach, and Paula Gill. Hilary Addington, Ariana Gilbert, and Tony Monfiletto provided much of the budgetary data. Mary B. O'Neill investigated the implementation of national reform initiatives in individual Chicago schools.

sets of related decisions which impinged upon LSCs as they were first getting started. The very first decision LSCs faced, before they even elected officers, was where to meet. While this decision seems to have an obvious answer, in fact, this was not the case. The law requires LSCs to meet in a public place where their meetings can be observed by the public (LSCs are subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act and to the Freedom of Information Act). However, under the terms of the Board of Education's contract with the operating engineers' union, schools could only be kept open free of charge for four nights a year, two of which are reserved for teacher-parent conferences on report card pickup days. The Board of Education informed LSCs that the central budget would not pay to keep schools open for LSC meetings, thus requiring LSCs to scramble to find other, free, public sites or to find the funds to pay to keep the school open. After much controversy, the Board did negotiate a change in the union contract which would allow the school to be open for two nights each month in exchange for compensatory time off for the engineers. However, for the first two months of the existence of LSCs, they were scurrying around spending part of their energy just trying to find places to meet.

Similarly, within weeks of their election, LSCs were informed that they had to adopt spending plans for the current year's State Chapter I funds. In a compromise with reform advocates, the board had allowed principals to determine the use of 25 percent of the new discretionary Chapter I funding prior to the LSC elections, but had reserved the decision on the use of the remainder of those funds to the LSCs. Because the Board of Education was required to report by December 15th to the State Board of Education on Chapter I use for the year, and because the State Board was unwilling to relax that reporting requirement during the first year of implementation,[7] the Chicago Board required LSCs to adopt a spending plan for those funds prior to December 1, 1989. This meant that LSCs had to devote several meetings, just as they were getting organized and before the members had had a chance to get to know one another, to decide upon the best use of fairly sizeable amounts of money. This was a considerable disruption in the intended pattern of reform in the first year, that LSCs would spend their initial months getting training and then doing an assessment of the needs of their schools prior to exercising their three major responsibilities: adopting an improvement plan, adopting a budget, and selecting a principal. Instead, they were forced to make important budget decisions prior to receiving training and prior to conducting a needs assessment.

LSCs are to be the essential unit of school governance and improvement under the Chicago School Reform Act. In addition to the broad powers to adopt a school improvement plan, to adopt a budget, and to select the school's principal, they are also

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[7] Both the Chicago Board of Education and the State Board of Education were defendants in a suit brought by Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE) and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund which charged that they had conspired to allow the Chicago Board to illegally spend State Chapter I funds. The suit was based upon a report of the Chicago Panel (1988).

charged to advise the principal and staff on curriculum, textbook selection, discipline and attendance. At various schools, these powers have been exercised in different ways. In some schools, LSCs formally acted to make decisions which were not strictly within their purview under the law. In other schools, LSC decisions were hard to discern and frequently were little more than agreements with reports from the principal. Council decision making will be examined more carefully following a description of the composition of the councils.

The initially elected council members were relatively well educated and had had extensive experience with their schools. Of course, most principals and teachers, in addition to being college graduates, had extensive post-graduate experience. Parents on the sampled elementary school LSCs averaged one year of college and five years of volunteer experience in their schools. High school parents tended to be more educated, averaging three years of college. Similarly community representatives at both types of schools averaged three or more years of college experience, and, like the high school parents, had volunteered at their schools for about three years. These parent and community LSC members had been active in community volunteer efforts, on average, between eight and nine years. Elementary school parents tended to be in their late thirties, while high school parents and most community representatives tended to be in their early to mid-forties. Of course, individual members varied quite widely on these characteristics, but as a group, these lay members of LSCs were educated, mature, and experienced.

During their first two year term, the active participation of individual LSC members was a significant concern. During the first year of LSC meetings, three of the sample schools requested that individual members resign as a result of their poor attendance. Five of the 60 original parent members and five of the 24 community representatives attended fewer than a quarter of all LSC meetings during that first year (Easton & Storey, 1990: 7f). Some of these non-performing members did resign and others resigned for a variety of other reasons (moving out of area, children graduated from school so no longer eligible, teachers or principals changed jobs). Overall, nearly three quarters of the original members served out their initial two year terms. In individual schools, the experience was quite diverse, from one elementary school in which every original member served the full term to a high school in which less than half the council persisted. When a vacancy occurred, LSCs elected a replacement (frequently the next highest vote getter in the original election). In four schools, some of these replacements themselves resigned and a second replacement was elected.

During the first year of the LSCs, average attendance in the elementary schools was at 70 percent (about 8 of 11 members present at each meeting), while at the high schools the average was 78 percent.[8] During the second year, attendance rates slipped slightly

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[8] LSC membership included six parents (one of whom would be elected chair), two community representatives, two teachers, and the principal. In high schools, a student member was also elected. At the end of the second year, the reform act was

lower, with an average rate of 69.3 percent for all 14 schools. During the second year of reform, the average LSC scheduled 13 meetings, with most holding monthly meetings and an occasional special meeting. One school held 25 meetings; another held only nine. The average length of meetings was an hour and a half, with some much longer (two and a half hours), and some quite short (three quarters of an hour).

Attendance varied greatly from council to council, ranging from a high of 9.6 in average attendance to a low of 6.8 during the first year (six members present represented a quorum and the number of votes necessary for passage of most matters). Most LSCs had a core of at least half of the members who could be counted upon to be present at most meetings. Thus, at these schools, there was a continuity of discussion from meeting to meeting. Attendance also varied from member to member and among types of members. Principals attended nearly all meetings during the first year (97.3 percent--two principals each missed one meeting). However, their attendance rate fell off during the second year to 88.1 percent, reflecting the lower attendance of non-retained principals following LSC decisions in the principal selection process. The chairpersons, who were all parents, increased their attendance from an 88 percent rate in the first year to 91 percent in the second. Teacher members' attendance dropped from 88 percent to 83.9 percent. Community members (67.1 percent, dropping to 59.3 percent) and other parents (61.7 and 59.4 percent) had the lowest attendance rates but still averaged attending about three out of five meetings. Thus, in the second year of their terms, LSC member attendance dropped slightly.

Members exercised their authority in different ways. Acting together, most LSCs adopted school improvement plans, adopted budgets, and selected principals. Across the system, all but 81 schools had adopted school improvement plans by the end of the first year and all but 40 had submitted budgets for 1990-91, according to the superintendent of schools (*Chicago Tribune*, August 15, 1990). As the first round of principal selection concluded, 324 principals who were serving schools when the reform act was signed into law had been selected by their LSCs to continue in that role. That means some 203 schools (38.5 percent) are now being served by principals who are new to their schools since reform was enacted. Systemwide, this was a significant change in the persons exercising newly expanded authority at the local school level. Three of the schools in the study sample selected new principals to replace incumbents; two offered contracts to interim appointees who had been newly appointed shortly before the LSCs were established. Thus, principal turnover in the sample schools (35.7 percent) was similar to that of the system as a whole.

On an average evening during the first year (LSCs usually met at night), six topics would be discussed, with school programs most frequently on the agenda. During the

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amended so that the high school student was empowered to vote on all but personnel and litigation matters. However, in neither year did student members average more than 50 percent attendance.

second year, LSCs addressed more topics (an average of 10.2), and organizational topics were the leading arena. General arenas of concern remained fairly constant from the first to the second year of reform, but there were some interesting shifts in attention (see Table 1).

In both years, the dominant topic arenas were the operations of the LSC itself and the programs of the school. Nearly three out of every five topics discussed involved one of these arenas. But the focus within each of these arenas shifted during the second year, as might have been expected. During the first year of the LSCs, the curriculum and instruction provided by the school was a major focus (12 percent of all topics) as LSC members familiarized themselves and debated what the school was actually teaching. During the second year, LSCs, having made decisions about the directions of their schools in the preceding year, paid much less attention to this arena, but dramatically increased their concern about the way the schools were being administered. Many of these administrative topics were little more than announcements included as part of the monthly principal's report, but other items included the scheduling of programs and classes, enrollment decisions, and busing concerns. One school had a heated discussion of promotion and graduation policies which stemmed from the principal's announcement about a letter he intended to send home to eighth grade students at risk of not graduating that year. Several members asked that these letters be made an agenda item for consideration. During the later discussion, the debate expanded to consideration of establishing an at-risk program and instituting mid-year graduations. The LSC decided to refer the letters and the potential changes in the graduation and promotion policies to its education committee for further review. Thus, an item which began as a simple announcement in the principal's report led to a significant discussion and an important proposal to change the way the school approached unsuccessful students.

LSCs were observed to spend more time on their own operations in the second year (up from 28 percent of all topics in the first year to 33 percent in the second[9]). But within this category, again, the focus shifted. In the first year, nearly a third of the conversations in this category (eight percent of all LSC topics) related to securing training for LSC members. With more experience in the second year of their term, members largely stopped talking about training (three percent of topics) but spent more time on attendance issues and filling vacancies, on keeping abreast of sub-district activities (District Council reports became a regular part of most LSC agendas), and some LSCs debated potential changes to the Reform Act which was being reconsidered by the General Assembly during the second half of the second year. These items had not occurred frequently enough in the first year to have been separately recorded.

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[9] First year observations were not begun until after LSCs had already organized themselves and therefore a higher number of organizational agenda items may actually have occurred than are reflected in this table.

Table 1
Topics Discussed at LSC Meetings

Categories and Sub-topics	Year 1 % of All Topics	Year 2 % of All Topics
School Program Topics	**29**	**27**
Curriculum and Instruction	13	6
School Improvement Planning	6	3
School Administration	7	17
Overcrowding	3	1
LSC Organizational Topics	**28**	**33**
LSC Procedures	20	19
LSC Training	8	3
Attendance/Vacancies *		5
District Reports *		3
Changes to Reform Act *		1
Announcements *		2
Building, Security, & Safety Topics	**13**	**10**
School/Bldg Infrastructure	3	4
Security, Safety & Discipline	10	6
Finance Topics	**11**	**12**
Finance and Budgeting	7	9
School Fund Raising	4	3
Personnel Topics	**11**	**10**
Principal Selection and Contract	6	7
Other Personnel	5	3
Parent and Community Involvement	**4**	**5**
Other	**5**	**4**

* (Items included in LSC Procedures in Year 1)

Three practical arenas, building/security, finance, and personnel, together occupied about a third of all LSC discussions. During the first year, building and safety concerns were slightly more prominent than finance and personnel issues; during the second year, finance topics took precedence among these three. Finance topics included both issues related directly to school budgets and fund raising efforts. Thus, during the second year, one school debated applying for an Illinois Bell/Ameritech LSC Award. The LSC formed a committee to complete the 24 page application, and LSC members were asked for suggestions at several subsequent meetings. The school's application was chosen as one of the 26 winners and it was awarded a $10,000 grant. Under personnel, discussions of principal selection remained constant for the sample of schools as a whole, though the emphasis in particular schools shifted. It should be noted that nine of these schools were involved in principal evaluation and selection during reform's first year, while only five in the sample were so involved during the second year. However, all LSCs are supposed to evaluate the principal annually. Less time was spent on other personnel issues in the second year.

Finally, parent and community involvement topics increased from four to five percent of all topics during the two years. Topics included efforts to increase parent and community commitment to the schools and their programs and relations of the schools to their neighborhoods. At one school, not formally observed during Year 1, the principal used the LSC meetings as a forum to encourage parent involvement. She discussed several parent issues at the first LSC meeting of the second year. She introduced the school's Parent Resource Team and described its services to the school; she explained the duties of parent volunteers and specified which parent positions receive stipends. She announced plans for workshops and grade-level meetings to instruct parents about helping their children and assisting the teachers. At the January LSC meeting, she introduced all the parent volunteers in attendance and thanked them for their contribution to the school. Unfortunately, this school's focus on parent involvement was not typical, and, although topics in this arena increased slightly during the second year, this vital arena for improved student learning remains largely neglected by LSCs.

Different members had different degrees of influence on decisions made by the LSCs. On most topics, about three members were likely to participate. More would be involved on hotly debated issues such as overcrowding; on announcement type issues, frequently only one person would be talking. As might be expected, principals participated more frequently than any other LSC member. Together, they addressed about two-thirds of all items discussed at LSC meetings (66.3 percent during the first year, 69.9 percent the second). The chairpersons most dramatically increased their participation in discussions (up from 43.4 percent in year one to 57.9 percent in the second). Teachers participated in a third of the topics discussed. Community members spoke about a quarter of the time and other parents spoke least frequently, to less than one in five of all discussed topics.

Of course, in different schools, these patterns varied widely. In one school, during the second year, the principal spoke to 92 percent of the topics, while at another, the

principal spoke to less than half of the issues discussed. At one school, the LSC chair spoke to nearly three quarters of all issues (74.2 percent) while at another the chair addressed only a quarter of the items (28.6 percent). Similarly, at one school the two teachers spoke to more than half of the agenda topics while at another, the teachers were almost silent, speaking to only one topic in five.

One of the most important discussions conducted by each LSC was around the creation and adoption of a School Improvement Plan. Mandated by the reform legislation, each studied LSC adopted a School Improvement Plan (SIP) during the first year of reform, and discussed changes to the plan during the second year. School improvement plans in the 14 studied schools varied widely. In three of the schools, the plans were rather cursory, with fewer than ten objectives set forth. None of these three schools made any plans to address the curriculum or instructional program of the school. The only school wide programs they addressed were related to improving attendance and student discipline. Only one sought to improve on the educational resource centers available to students (a high school seeking to open a math lab). About school organization, they made only minor suggestions which were essentially focused on adding time for students to work rather than any form of reorganization of their current resources (see Table 2).

By contrast, three other schools addressed changes in virtually every aspect of their curriculum, intended to create new learning resource centers for students, and envisioned rather extensive reorganization in the ways teachers interact with students, including team teaching and regrouping to foster cooperative learning. It is apparent, from reading these plans, that these school councils have much more extensive ideas about changes they wanted to see happen in their schools. It also seems obvious that, in these schools, teachers took a more active role in proposing changes which they thought would be beneficial to their students. Two of these schools had been involved in a year long staff training and planning process under the system's desegregation programs. The third had employed professional, non-profit planning facilitators to assist them in creating their plan. The remaining eight schools in the sample seem to fall somewhere in between these extremes.

Table 2

Components of School Improvement Plans

	Elementary schools										High Schools			
REFORM INITIATIVE	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	W	X	Y	Z
CURRICULUM		+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	
English												+	+	
Language Arts		+	+	+	+	+			+	+				
Math		+	+	+	+	+			+	+				
Social Science			+			+						+		
Science			+	+	+	+			+	+		+	+	
Arts			+	+	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	
Interdisciplinary			+	+	+					+		+	+	+
SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMS	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Tutoring		+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Mentoring									+				+	
Adopt-A-Student						+								+
Exchange									+					
Speakers		+				+							+	+
Incentives		+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+		+	+	
Attendance	+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Discipline	+	+	+			+		+			+	+	+	+
LABS/LEARNING CENTERS		+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+
Study													+	
Reading/Research					+					+				
Reading				+	+	+	+		+		+		+	
Writing					+							+	+	
Science			+	+	+	+				+		+	+	
Write to Read		+				+								
Literature					+									
Math			+	+	+	+					+			
TEACHER SUPPORT	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Staff development		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Personnel	+			+	+	+		+	+	+			+	
Incentives				+		+		+	+			+		+
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+			+	+
Team teaching			+	+	+									+
Lower class size		+	+	+		+	+	+	+			+		
Extended day	+			+		+		+					+	
Rotating teachers				+										
School within					+								+	
Time-on-task						+		+	+					
Cooperative learning			+	+					+					
Double period													+	
Grouping			+	+										
Walking reading				+		+				+				
PARENTS	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Informational		+		+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+
Training	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+			+	+
Volunteer			+	+	+	+			+	+			+	
Self-Help				+	+									
OUTSIDE AGENCIES	+		+		+	+	+		+	+	+		+	+

Note: This table shows which reform initiatives are contained in each of fourteen school improvement plans. The table divides the reform initiatives into seven major categories and several subcategories. The + marks indicate which initiatives each plan contains.

When the relationship between the needs assessments conducted by schools and the adopted school improvement plans was examined, a great variance between schools was discovered. In a number of schools, the needs assessments were quite detailed and carefully pointed out specific problems which needed to be remedied. Frequently, the school improvement plans then included quite specific approaches to attack those problems. However, in other schools virtually no needs assessment was completed. In several, the needs statements seemed to be simply a restatement of the goal arenas incorporated in the school reform act (the central office had supplied all LSCs with a school improvement planning guide which included planning pages for each arena included in the legislation). In these latter schools, the improvement steps were more cursory and seemed less likely to be realized.

As might be expected from Chicago style restructuring, there were many different approaches adopted in the 14 schools in the study sample. One school decided to focus on boosting the self-esteem of its students as its major focus for improvement and therefore adopted an Afro-centric curriculum as the centerpiece of its reform. It intended to integrate that curriculum approach in all classrooms in the school. Other schools identified particular parts of their school program which were weak or in which students were not achieving as well as needed to meet national norms. They designed programs aimed at those specific problem areas. Still other schools saw their major problem in increasing attendance and focused on ways to get kids into school, while paying little attention to improving what these students would encounter when they did attend.

Most of the initiatives included within the 14 school improvement plans were well supported by current research on school improvement. There was some interest, in some schools, in moving towards cooperative learning and the general approaches included under the heading "student as learner." In many schools there was a focus on increasing time on task. There was an attention to moving beyond simply using basal readers to include literature and, in several schools, the Junior Great Books approach, to move students towards an enjoyment of reading. It must be remembered that it has only been a few years since all Chicago classrooms were forced to use Chicago's peculiar form of mastery learning which concentrated almost exclusively on sub-components of reading and the use of workbooks; thus, the movement back to basal readers in 1985 was a major step. Many schools now seem ready to take the next step. The major exception to this alignment with current theories in school improvement was one school which unapologetically decided to adopt homogeneous grouping of students to facilitate instruction. This unabashed tracking plan flies in the face of most research demonstrating the harmful effects it has on students labelled as the slow learners (Oakes, 1985; Rosenbaum, 1980; Slavin, 1978).

Moving back from the specific analysis of individual school plans, it is necessary to concur with staff from the school system's central office that these plans were not likely to create radical change in most of the studied schools (Chicago Public Schools, 1990:2). They rely more upon adding on small increments than upon making radical changes. In three of the schools, fairly significant changes have been planned. In three others, the plans seem

pedestrian exercises. In the majority of schools, the plans call for more of the same, in educational programming. That is probably not radical enough to create the kind of change that is necessary to meet the goals of the reform act. But the plans adopted may be the necessary developmental steps toward later plans which are more radical. Only time and further observation will determine if that potential is realized.

During the second year of the reform effort, LSCs were to review and, if necessary, revise the School Improvement Plans adopted during year one. Revisions were to be completed by May first. At one school council members spent many hours in committee and council meetings reviewing and revising the SIP. Throughout the year, these committees met to decide how best to achieve their curricular goals in areas such as reading, math, and science. Committees presented their recommendations to the LSC for discussion. In March and April, the LSC held five council meetings to review and revise the plan. The council discussed the initiatives that had been implemented in the 1990-91 school year and debated the proposed revisions. At the fourth meeting, the principal presented a draft of the new SIP. The LSC studied the draft and called for more revisions. The final version of the plan was submitted and approved on April 30th. Council members at this school have a thorough understanding of their school improvement plan, and they played a significant role in its development.

In contrast, LSC members at another school, a high school, did not review the existing SIP, even though they had requested implementation reports from various teacher committees. The council saw the revised plan for the first time at their last meeting before the May 1 deadline. Some of the members expressed their reluctance to approve an extensive plan that they had had no opportunity to read. Nevertheless, because of the pressure of time, the principal asked the LSC to go ahead and approve the revised school improvement plan. The LSC acquiesced.

During the second year of reform, School Improvement Plans (SIPs) included initiatives in three major arenas: changes in curriculum, changes in school organization, and changes in instructional practice. Some initiatives did not fit into these three categories. Among the 14 observed schools, SIPs included relatively few initiatives aimed to change instructional practice. Curricular changes included adopting new textbooks or reading programs, adding new art or science programs, refocusing the program emphasis to enhance student esteem (as in the Afro-centric curriculum adopted at one school), or adding curricular labs. Organizational changes included lowering class sizes, establishing a walking reading program to change student groupings for that subject, starting school within a school programs, extended day offerings, and tutoring. Other initiatives included efforts to improve student attendance, improve discipline in the school, or expand parent and community involvement. Many of the curricular and organizational initiatives appear to be "add-ons" to the regular school program, frequently serving only a segment of a school's student body. Add-on programs were relatively easy to implement, frequently involving little more than hiring a new staff person and assigning a space for the program to operate. In most cases, these add-ons, while valuable in making progress towards some reform goals, are likely to

have little effect on the regular instructional program experienced by most students. Thus, these changes are unlikely to significantly improve student achievement levels, as also called for under the reform act.

Four of the 14 schools focused their improvement plans on changing instructional practices in the regular classroom; three other schools included instructional change initiatives as part of the SIP. Instructional practices involve how things are taught, the way teachers teach, rather than what is taught (the curriculum). Some faculties are learning how to use sustained silent reading, writing across the curriculum, or the Socratic method of discussion across all subjects. Hands-on learning in science and math was also emphasized for the entire faculty. At other schools, only teachers in particular departments or at certain grade levels were participating in instructional initiatives. In one school, the primary teachers were adopting a "whole language" approach, emphasizing using words in longer passages and stories while deemphasizing worksheets. Team teaching, peer tutoring, and cooperative learning were more related to individual teachers willing to try out new instructional practices. Teacher leaders indicated that only those teachers who are motivated to improve their own instructional practices push themselves to do so. One Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC) chair commented:

> ...(S)ome people are willing to change and other people are older and have lived successfully and feel that what they're doing has value, so don't feel the need to change. Those are the people you have to make into believers.

This teacher suggests that schoolwide implementation of instructional initiatives occurs only when all the teachers are "believers" and will commit themselves to learn and employ the new approach to teaching involved in the initiative.

Inservice training, sometimes called staff development, is a critical aspect of successful implementation of instructional change. The depth, length, and effectiveness of such staff development varies widely, however. Short term "inservices" tend to be less successful in creating real change. One PPAC chair described the inservice at her school:

> We've had two sessions. The first was a 30 minute session on the basal reading program. That was in September....We're part of the Technical Assistance Center and we had two 90 minute workshops on the whole language program.

In contrast, teachers at another school attended a single staff development program by the Illinois Writing Project for three hours every Wednesday afternoon for ten weeks. Greater instructional change is likely to be promoted by a ten week staff development program than from two 90 minute "inservices."

Interviews with instructional leaders (principals and PPAC chairs) indicate that faculties are making real progress in implementing instructional change initiatives in six of

the seven schools with such elements in their SIPs. But they described the implementation as a lengthy and difficult process. They report that teachers must be convinced that changing their current practice is worth the commitment of time and effort required. They also must provide mutual support as they experiment with new strategies and adapt them to meet the needs of their students. These leaders indicate that instructional change initiatives will require an on-going effort.

It is encouraging to note that more schools included the effort to change instructional practice in their SIPs during the second year than had been seen to do so during the first year. If student achievement is to improve in Chicago, more schools will need to direct a greater focus on this arena.

B. The Principals -- New Roles and Changing Leadership

The Chicago School Reform Act focuses additional authority and responsibility on local school principals. In line with recent research into effective schools (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Purkey & Smith, 1983), the principal is seen as one of the key elements in school improvement efforts. Principals are given new authority to select new members of their faculties without regard for seniority. They are asked to take the initiative in creating the school's improvement plan. Most principals take the lead in proposed spending plans, including the adoption of the local school budget. Principals are expected to play the major role in managing the day to day affairs of the school. And, finally, principals are held accountable for the successes and failures of the schools. The ultimate form of accountability is that principals may now be removed from leadership at the school if councils find their leadership inadequate. Prior to reform, Chicago principals had been selected by local school communities under an advisory system of advertized positions, multiple interviews by local selection committees, and the submission of a ranked list of three recommendations to the general superintendent. In most cases, though not all, the highest preference was appointed by the General Superintendent. Under the original reform legislation, Local School Councils would now be able to dismiss principals, but principal dismissal was largely restricted to those times when their contracts expired (the legislation indicated that half of all principals would be deemed to have "contracts" expire during the first year of reform and half during the second year). Thereafter, principals would be signed to four year performance contracts, with annual evaluations and quadrennial selection processes. Amendments to the Reform Act adopted in 1991 allow LSCs to dismiss principals for direct defiance of LSC directions during the term of their contracts.

As indicated above, nine of the 14 sample schools selected incumbent principals to provide continued leadership under reform. At three schools, new principals were selected; at two others, recently appointed interim principals were given four year contracts. Thus, the proportion of new principals in the sampled schools since passage of the reform act is similar to the 38 percent turnover systemwide. While local and national media outlets

provided wide coverage to individual schools where principals were not retained, little attention was paid to the evaluation and selection process these schools undertook. The process varied from school to school, though most schools followed guidelines proposed originally by the Lawyers School Reform Advisory Project and incorporated in Board of Education materials. These guidelines carefully separated the evaluation and selection process, suggesting that schools first evaluate the incumbent and decide whether to offer that person a four year contract. Only if that decision was negative would schools embark upon a new selection process. Some schools, however, preferred to test their incumbents against other potential candidates. Councils selecting a new principal required a super majority of seven (out of a possible ten votes; principals and students were not allowed to vote on the principal evaluation and selection items). If an LSC could not achieve a super majority for one candidate, it was to present a list of three acceptable candidates to the subdistrict superintendent who would select a principal for the school. The experiences of three schools during reform's second year exemplify some of the different approaches to principal evaluation and selection taken by LSCs.

At one school, the LSC established a principal evaluation committee which launched the evaluation process at the LSC's first meeting by setting out standards which would be followed. After discussion at several meetings, sub-committees were established to review student progress, staff development, parent and community involvement, and the effectiveness of school programs. Surveys of parents and teachers were designed with input from each LSC constituency (parents, teachers, community representatives). The LSC met with the principal in three formal evaluation interviews, with members judging each answer on a 1 to 5 scale. The LSC took public testimony about the principal's performance. The LSC also received and considered an evaluation of the principal by the District Superintendent. Fairness was a theme throughout the evaluation process, even to the extent of resurveying the faculty when the original survey appeared to have been haphazardly distributed. Despite a continuing tension between some LSC members and the principal, at the end of this process the LSC voted to extend a new four year contract to the principal, though exercising its right to add several criteria to the performance expected of the principal during the ensuing four years.

At a second school, the evaluation and selection processes were intermingled. Observers suspected that the LSC leaders had already decided to dismiss the incumbent principal, suspicions which seemed confirmed when, early in the year, the LSC chair announced that the principal selection process would be opened "for option." Discussions in subsequent meetings elicited ideas about how to do the principal evaluation, but got little more specific than suggesting individuals observe the school and report their perceptions to the evaluation committee. Later meetings considered criteria which might be used to evaluate the principal and members worried about how to get adequate parent and community input and decided to conduct a survey. Before the evaluation was completed, the LSC chair announced she had advertized the principal's position in the General Superintendent's Bulletin. The principal objected; the district superintendent stepped in to direct the LSC to first complete its evaluation. The LSC retracted the advertisement and

apologized to the principal. The principal indicated he would accept a contract from the school if it was offered, but would not compete with other candidates if the position was declared vacant.

The LSC resumed the evaluation process and conducted a formal interview with the principal. Although the faculty overwhelmingly voted to retain the principal, the LSC decided not to, and opened a search for a successor. Shortly thereafter, the incumbent took a terminal leave of absence, leaving the school without day to day administrative leadership.

A principal selection committee was formed with LSC, faculty, and non-teaching staff represented. The position was readvertized and applications screened to four finalists, who appeared at a public candidate's forum. Colleagues of each finalist were interviewed and the results evaluated. The faculty favored one candidate; several parents favored another. After an hour long executive session, the LSC returned to open meeting to declare itself nearly deadlocked, but committed to trying to come to a decision. A compromise choice of a third candidate finally won unanimous approval. The successful candidate was then invited to become the interim principal, a proposal which was accepted. Thus, the new principal actually began work about two months prior to the formal beginning of a new four year contract on July 1.

At a third school, the principal selection process eventually reached the desk of the district superintendent for his choice for a new principal. The school began the process early in the school year by receiving the district superintendent's evaluation of the incumbent. A principal evaluation committee developed, in public meetings with input from the principal, forms on which each LSC member would rate the principal. The chair of the evaluation committee solicited assistance from the Lawyers School Reform Advisory Project in the form of a *pro bono* lawyer who advised members on their legal obligations throughout the evaluation process. The lawyer was invited to sit in on executive sessions in which the LSC interviewed and evaluated the principal, a point later contested by the principal. The LSC conducted several public forums to hear testimony relative to the principal's evaluation, most of which was quite positive, though a few negative presentations were made including one anonymous letter. Although the public comments were primarily positive, the LSC voted not to extend a new contract to the principal; he was invited to apply for the position to compete with other applicants.

In contrast to the previous principal, this one sought a vote by the LSC reaffirming his status as principal until the end of the year. The LSC chair then moved that the principal continue to work with the LSC on all school matters for the remainder of the year. Both motions passed.

A subcommittee of the evaluation committee was formed to establish a job description and to develop criteria to screen candidates for the principal's position. The position was advertized. LSC members participated in training in how to conduct interviews. The selection committee narrowed the field and a series of interviews were held. Seven

finalists were invited to attend a candidates forum; the incumbent was not one of the finalists. After the forum, the finalists were narrowed to three, but none could muster the needed seven votes. After several attempts to break the deadlock, the LSC turned the three names over to the district superintendent who chose one to become the school's new principal.

These three cases show the range of experiences schools underwent as they sought to evaluate and make decisions about their administrative leadership. Of all issues undertaken by Local School Councils during the first two years of reform, it is safe to say this was the single most emotionally charged item on LSC agendas. As the systemwide numbers indicate, the majority of schools offered incumbent principals new four year contracts. Others did the same for more recently appointed interim principals. Still others decided to not retain the incumbent, entered into a search process, and selected a new principal. In a few cases, LSCs could not achieve a super majority for any candidate and the district superintendent made the ultimate choice.

Some councils were more rigorous than others in the procedures they established and observed to accomplish an objective and informed judgment about their current leadership. Others seemed to have made a subjective judgment even before entering into the formal evaluation process. It must be remembered that all three cases described here occurred after LSCs had been working with the incumbent principal for more than a year, whereas during the first year of principal selection, LSCs had only a few months of formal interaction with the incumbent, and that was during the period when the LSCs were trying to get themselves organized and functioning. The selection process will not now recur, in a major way, until after the third set of LSCs have been elected in the fall of 1993, when the first set of principals' four year contracts will expire. However, some schools will continue to confront the issue as current principals retire, leave for other positions, die, or become incapacitated.

Of all the actors in the school improvement efforts under Chicago school reform, principals have undoubtedly experienced the greatest change. As just reviewed, they had to undergo a more or less rigorous evaluation and the uncertainty of whether or not they would continue in their present jobs. About one in six of the principals in office when the reform act was signed into law decided to avoid this stress by taking early retirement. Leaders in the Chicago Principals Association filed suit to avoid their loss of tenure, a suit whose major premise was denied, but which resulted in the overturning of the act by the Illinois Supreme Court, as noted earlier. More than 150 new persons stepped forward to enter the ranks of selected principals under contract. But in addition to the stress of job selection, principals found their day to day responsibilities shifting dramatically.

Only six of the eleven retained principals in the first year school sample identified

changes in their role which they characterized as positive.[10] Two principals cited the increased discretion/flexibility that they have as a result of school reform. One principal noted that she could get things done more quickly because she did not need approval from various layers of the bureaucracy. She also noted she could acquire better teachers for the school by conducting her own interviews and making her own selection based on merit, not seniority. She also liked the discretionary funds now available at her school. She put it this way:

> We were able to take State Chapter I money and allocate more money for books and supplies. We were able to allocate where we felt our needs were. And I've also written in four positions for summer school. We always have far more kids wanting to go to summer school than the board ever let us have.

Several principals commented on the additional assistance they receive under school reform. One commended the additional wisdom brought by LSC members and the advantage of making decisions collaboratively. He commented, "It's inconceivable to me that a lot of people are going to come together and agree on something that isn't for the benefit of the children." Another principal commented that reform had given him ten potential allies, but noted that the potential "ain't happened yet." Other principals commented upon the new assistance they were receiving from professionals and universities. Yet another principal commented upon the higher level of communications required by working with her LSC. She noted that she had always been a planner, but realized now that she had not always let others know what those plans were. She saw the new need to communicate as increasing the involvement of others.

Principals also appreciated the power they had to select staff. One commented,

> You might say that students have been better served because for the first time this year, when I had a vacancy, I didn't have to take the teacher [that] the Personnel Department sent me. I had a choice. I know of one case,...who I would have gotten, and I know that I made a better choice because this [other] teacher, the last seven schools he was in, every principal closed the whole....program just to get rid of him. That's how bad he was, and nobody wanted to go through due process because it was easier to close the program for a year and later reopen it.

Interestingly, there was little evidence in our sample schools of principals seeking to use the relaxed procedures for remediation and dismissal of unsatisfactory teachers. This is a new power principals have but few appear to have begun to utilize it.

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[10] Principal interviews for this report were conducted during the spring of 1990. The analysis of those interviews, which forms the basis of this section of this paper, was conducted by Darryl Ford (1991).

Some principals felt school reform had brought an increase in total power at the local school level. While others saw the power equation more as a zero sum game, one saw it somewhat differently:

> One of the things about the school reform act is that it stresses a sharing of power and hopefully we will be able to illustrate that through sharing, we all have more power. Rather than diminishing power that we all have, we increase it. We increase our ability to accomplish by sharing power. That's the great hope of reform...

However, overall, principals were more prone to make negative comments about changes in their roles under reform. The most common complaint was about time. One principal said,

> The only thing I worry about is time: time, time, time. It's amazing, these people get on one small topic and you can spend an hour on it. Then, when you think about the many things that we have to cover, it adds up. But the one thing I am fully committed to is spending all the time that I am asked to spend.

Another principal echoed that complaint, and reinforced the image of the principal as the information provider:

> The downside of school reform is that I just don't have enough time in my day. It's taken far more time. First of all, I'm spending a lot of time explaining to people who have no background knowledge. It's just time consuming. I'm not decrying it; it's just time consuming.

Other principals noted that the time demanded by the LSC elections and new activities related to council operations have entailed certain opportunity costs, particularly related to supervision and contact with other members of the faculty.

Another principal noted that she had taken on three new roles which she did not think appropriate. The first was that of being a Public Relations figure. She complained about the time she had to spend with parents on PR instead of doing her job. She suggested that if she did not spend a lot of time smiling at parents, her contract would not be renewed. Several other principals also mentioned the fears they had about LSCs misusing their powers to fire principals without good reason. This principal also complained that she had to spend time being a referee, trying to bring together two different factions in her school community. Finally, she was frustrated in that she felt like her post-reform role was primarily being a glorified clerk.

> But you know, this is becoming very frustrating because it seems like everything is falling on my shoulders--dealing with the parents, dealing with

> the local school council, dealing with the teachers, getting all of the reports done--and it's very frustrating....You know, I feel like a glorified clerk. You see what I'm saying, why I'm so frustrated--because that's all that I am, a glorified clerk.

One other principal, in commenting negatively about the way his council was operating, unknowingly revealed how some councils infringed upon the powers legally mandated to the principal. He complained,

> Here we are, we're interviewing four persons for the position of Child Welfare Attendant. *We* are interviewing. Now, I have to adjust to that. That is my problem with it. I just honestly feel that I'm in the better position to know which of those four should be in that position.

Interestingly, this principal is uncomfortable with the LSC being involved in personnel selection, but is apparently unaware that this function is really his prerogative, not the LSC's. However, it may be that this principal has been intimidated by the other members of the LSC. Other principals were worried about LSC members exceeding their authority. One was particularly concerned that LSC members would not stick to policy issues, as Board of Education members are supposed to do, but would try to circumvent the principal to be directly involved in issues such as teacher evaluation, another responsibility clearly delegated to principals under the reform act.

Several principals commented on the new demands on them to work collaboratively with new groups of people, whether it be the LSC on budgeting or the Professional Personnel Advisory Committee on instructional matters. These cooperative efforts provide increased involvement, but are not as efficient as when the principals did things by themselves.

But some principals saw this expansion of authority at the local level less charitably. One principal complained that she possessed more responsibility for education, but had less help, the same salary, and her job on the line. She commented, "[We] have all this power, but on the other hand, we have a sword hanging over our heads." Another principal commented that she did not like the fact that two teachers would help to decide whether her contract would be renewed.

Nearly half of the principals echoed the concern about ultimate responsibility lying with the principal. Principals commented that "the final burden is on the principal" or "the ultimate responsibility is mine" or "let's face it, responsibility for this stuff really comes back basically to the principal." Still one principal expressed the relationship between the principal and the LSC a bit differently:

> The local school council is an oversight [authority] for the school--who operates through the principal. That's the kind of relationship we have--

oversight committees or as liaisons, and they work through, not with.

C. The Teachers -- Becoming Increasingly Involved

The constituency which has, perhaps, been most ignored in the development of the first two years of the Chicago school reform effort, is the group which has been the focus of other school based management experiments across the country, the teachers. In cities like Hammond, Miami, Los Angeles, and New York boards of education and affiliate locals of the American Federation of Teachers have entered into agreements to share decision making at the school level. Similarly, in smaller towns and some urban districts like Memphis, boards have initiated pilot projects in shared decision making with teacher groups under the National Education Association's *21st Century Schools* project.[11] And across the country, there are efforts like Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools which are seeking to involve teachers in a fundamental rethinking of the ways high schools and middle schools should be structured. In all of these settings, teachers have dominated the school level improvement efforts. Though it is obvious that few significant changes will happen in Chicago's classrooms without the active involvement of teachers, they have been far less the focus of activities in this city's reform efforts.

In order to better assess the role and perspective of teachers in the Chicago reform effort, staff from the Chicago Panel have been involved in conducting two surveys of teachers across the system. As reform was just beginning, the Panel conducted a small survey of teachers from a stratified, random sample of 12 predominantly minority elementary schools (Easton, 1989). Teachers were surveyed during the first month of school in 1989, prior to the election of the first LSCs in October of that year. Thus, the study captured teacher attitudes before school based management had begun to really function.

Teachers felt they were well informed about the reform effort which was just then beginning, having received most of their information from the school administration and from the news media. They had been discussing reform among themselves and with their colleagues; one third said they had spent more than two hours discussing reform during the past week, and another third had discussed it for at least one hour. But they were less likely to see themselves as directly involved in the reform effort. Only one fifth indicated interest in running for one of the two teacher slots on the LSC. Less than half thought they would participate on the Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC). Teachers who were more knowledgeable about the reform act indicated they would be more likely to be actively involved in reform efforts. On the other hand, more than half had urged parents to run for

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[11] See Hanson, Morris, & Collins, forthcoming, and Etheridge and Collins, forthcoming, for a description of early implementation of teacher empowerment efforts in Miami and Memphis, respectively. See Muncey and McQuillan, forthcoming, for an evaluation of early efforts through the Coalition of Essential Schools.

seats on the LSCs. Teachers were not very optimistic about reform's prospect, expecting little change in student achievement or teacher autonomy and morale; they were most optimistic that parent involvement would improve under reform. Similarly, when asked which arenas they thought reform should emphasize, parent education topped the list.

When teachers were asked, in an open-ended question, to list the strengths and weaknesses of the beginning reform effort, parent involvement led both lists. Teachers were optimistic that parent involvement would help to improve their schools. One teacher wrote, "Whole family/parental involvement is possible and seems to be developing as parents now think/feel that they `own' their own schools." They were also optimistic about the development of a more collaborative effort among parents, teachers, and administrators. On the other hand, teachers were also most fearful of increased parent involvement, particularly of the levels of competence parents would bring and of the threat of interference in the classroom. One wrote, "It is difficult to imagine a sudden parental competence or educational interest." Another indicated what was feared was:

> When parents begin to interfere with the teaching profession of the classroom. When parents attempt to be vindictive for some past grievance. When parents give certain staff members a hard time that has nothing to do with education.

Thus, at the beginning of reform implementation, teachers saw additional parental involvement as the most likely outcome of the effort; they saw that involvement as reform's greatest potential strength, and at the same time, its greatest potential weakness.

Panel staff were also involved in a much more extensive survey of all elementary teachers in the system, conducted at the end of the second year of school reform. This survey was sponsored by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (Easton, *et al.*, 1991). The Consortium combines the efforts of several area universities, non-profit research agencies, and the Chicago Board of Education. Panel staff led the work group which designed, distributed, and analyzed the results of the teacher survey. Various groups of stakeholders, including teachers, principals, and systemwide administrators, provided input on what the survey should ask, how it should be administered, and what the results meant.

More than 13,000 teachers responded to the survey, a return rate of over 70 percent. Given that the survey took from 30 to 45 minutes to answer, teachers made a considerable effort to participate. The high response rate and the time required to complete it are indications of how anxious teachers were to have their voice heard. Sensing this, the survey work group named the survey, *Charting Reform: The Teachers' Turn*.

Two years into the reform effort, teachers appear to be far more involved in school improvement efforts than they had anticipated when reform was being launched. More than half of the respondents (53 percent) indicated they had been involved in helping to develop the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for their school. More than three quarters (77 percent)

said they were familiar with the major points in their SIP. More than two-thirds (68 percent) indicated they were helping to implement their SIP. A similar number (66 percent) thought the SIP would help to make their school better over the next five years. More than 70 percent have attended PPAC and LSC meetings and a similar number say they spend more than one hour per week working on a school committee or reform group. Thus, among elementary school teachers, there does seem to be a high level of involvement in school improvement efforts at the school level.

And teachers are fairly optimistic about how well the reform effort is working. They believe the principal and LSC work well together (71 percent), that LSCs respect teachers' views (57 percent) and that the teacher representatives on the LSCs fairly represent their views (66 percent). They believe that the Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC) is an important voice for teachers in their schools (68 percent), that their PPAC represents their views, and that the PPAC has increased teacher involvement in school policy decisions (62 percent).

Interviews with PPAC chairs in the sampled schools produced a similar picture. Although teacher participation in school improvement planning varied among the 14 schools, teacher leaders indicated that principals and LSCs respected faculty contributions. Some PPAC chairs commented:

> Last year, [the LSC] took our document and just about adopted the whole thing as the SIP.
>
> None of our suggestions were ever turned down....We had a contingency plan, if enough money comes up; it's for an additional guidance counselor.
>
> I did attend the last LSC meeting, and they accepted everything.

Teachers are also optimistic about developments in their schools, in most cases. Three out of five surveyed think their school is getting better (60 percent) and that there are no more disruptions than prior to reform (59 percent). Refuting the concerns of early reform critics, they do not think reform has created greater conflict in their schools (58 percent). And they are more optimistic, since reform, that their schools will improve (63 percent). However, teachers are much more evenly split on whether there is more cooperation in their schools, whether principals solicit teacher involvement any more frequently or teachers have more influence on school policy, except, apparently, through the PPAC.

When survey responses were compiled into a General Reform Index for each participating school, teachers at three quarters of the schools (303 of 401) felt reform was going well at their schools. In 62 schools teachers thought reform was doing very well; in another 241, teacher response was moderately positive. In 89 schools, teachers were somewhat negative, while in only 9 schools were teachers very negative about reform efforts.

The 62 "lighthouse" reform schools were evenly distributed across the whole city, but tended to be in smaller schools and in schools with historically higher levels of student achievement. Thus, at most schools, teachers were quite positive about school reform at the end of its second year. But it is also clear that there are some schools in which reform is not working very well at this point. When only the 303 positive schools are included in the calculations, the 60 percent generally positive ratings soar upwards towards 80 percent, which is remarkable unanimity about reform's initial successes at these schools.

But there are also some troubling findings from the survey. Teachers report a serious gap exists in parent-teacher relationships. Teachers think that their schools reach out to parents (78 percent), but only half (51 percent) feel supported by parents and only three in five (59 percent) feel parents respect teachers. A majority (54 percent) feel community members do not make efforts to help their schools.

Disappointingly, only two-thirds (67 percent) feel their students are capable of learning the material they are supposed to teach. Two-thirds also believe that students' attitudes and habits reduce their chances for success. Meanwhile, teachers claim to be quite competent in their teaching (93 percent), to look forward to working each day (77 percent), and they are certain they are making a difference in their students' lives (90 percent). Thus, the picture once again emerges of teachers who think they are doing fine, and that the problems in the school system revolve around lack of parental support, the incapacities of their students, and the habits and attitudes students bring to school with them.

Given this picture, it is not surprising to find that, despite their optimism about the potential of reform, the changes made since reform began have had no effect on their classroom practices (57 percent). More significantly, a majority (55 percent) believe their instructional practices will not change as a result of the School Improvement Plans adopted in their schools, plans which they had a large share in creating. It appears that teachers believe reform will have an important impact on improving parent involvement and changing student attitudes, which will obviate any necessity for teachers to make any significant changes themselves.

It is unlikely that important changes will be made in the classrooms where Chicago students engage in learning until teachers begin to think seriously about the ways they themselves must change. Perhaps teachers need reminding that when they use their forefingers to point at others as the cause of low student achievement, three other fingers on the same hand point back at themselves. Until all constituencies in Chicago's local schools acknowledge that they must contribute to the changes occurring in these schools, significant improvement is unlikely to happen. Thus, despite the optimism for reform expressed by teachers, a degree of skepticism about their reports seems warranted.

D. The Resources -- Reallocated to the School Level

The Chicago School Reform Act requires the Chicago Board of Education to reallocate 95 percent of the funds it receives from the state as a result of its enrollment of economically disadvantaged students. Called State Chapter I, 60 percent of these funds had been targeted to schools on the basis of enrollment of low income students under legislation enacted in 1978. In 1988, the Chicago Panel revealed that a third of those targeted funds had been misappropriated from these schools and diverted to support central office bureaucrats (Chicago Panel, 1988). The Panel also noted that the Board of Education used these supposedly compensatory funds to provide basic services in schools with high enrollments of low income students while providing the same services at other schools out of regular operating support. The reform act put an end to the fund diversion and required that State Chapter I funds provide discretionary, not basic, programs. This reallocation was to be phased in over five years. At the midway point in reform implementation, 90 percent of these funds were targeted on the basis of low income enrollments and more than 60 percent were available for use at the discretion of the Local School Councils.

Between the enactment of the reform act in December of 1988 and the 1991-92 school year (Fiscal Years 1989 and 1992), the Chicago Board's operating revenues increased by $403 million. The federal government provided $106 million more in support of free lunches and additional programs for low income students. The state, over four years, increased its support of the Chicago Public Schools by a mere $25 million. Local property taxes increased by $272 million, more than the projected five year costs of reallocating the State Chapter I funds.

Table 3
CPS Operating Revenues
(in millions)

	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	Change
Local	$ 781.5	$ 887.6	$ 951.3	$ 1,053.6	$ 272.1
State	920.9	1,009.6	929.3	946.3	25.4
Federal	245.9	274.0	293.1	351.7	105.8
Total	$1,948.3	$2,171.2	$2,173.7	$2,351.6	$ 403.3

Under the mandate of the reform act to reallocate resources towards schools with heavy enrollments of low income students and under the mandate to reduce non-instructional costs below the average proportion for such costs in all other school districts in the state, the Chicago Board of Education has been forced to reduce staff in its administrative units by 840 positions. At the same time, staff in local schools has increased by 3,365. Whereas, in December of 1988 88.5 percent of the system's staff was budgeted to schools, by the midway point in reform implementation, the proportion had grown to 92.4 percent. This represents a significant reallocation of the system's resources.

As Table 4 shows, total staff increased by 2,525.3 positions between the beginning of reform and its midway point. Staff with direct contact with students increased by 3,036.9 positions (667.9 more classroom teachers; 458.4 more educational support staff such as social workers, guidance counselors, librarians, etc.; and 1,915.6 additional classroom aides). Meanwhile, administrators (65.7), professional and technical staff (40.5), clerks and lunchroom staff (362.4), and maintenance and trades persons (43) all decreased, for a total reduction of 511.6 non-student contact positions. Again, this is a significant reallocation of the system's resources towards staff who have direct contact with students. In FY 1989, 68.0 percent of the staff had direct contact with students; by FY 1992, 70.9 percent did.

As already noted, most of the increase in staff occurred in schools, particularly for the student contact staff. Although not shown in Table 4, most of that increase was in categorically funded positions not supported by the Board's general operating funds. In fact, general operating positions declined by 2,172, while categorical positions were increasing by 4,697. At the school level, operating positions declined by 964 while categorical positions increased by 4,946. These positions were largely funded by federal grants or by State Chapter I reallocations. Thus, these positions were largely at the discretion of Local School Councils.

However, the Board of Education did dilute the new discretionary powers of the LSCs. By cutting staff at the school level who were funded by general operating funds, the Board forced LSCs to use discretionary funds to restore positions which they had come to consider as part of their basic education program. In some cases, the Board did not allow school councils any choice; in FY 1991, some 600 high school classroom aides, required by the Board's contract with the Chicago Teachers Union, were arbitrarily reclassified as discretionary positions to be funded by State Chapter I funds. Such an action, in direct defiance of the intent of the reform act, seems to be unconscionable. Across the system, some 415.8 regular classroom positions were closed, mostly in high schools, though many were replaced by categorical increases of 1,360.7. Similarly, some 556.6 aides were cut out of regular school budgets (mostly the high school aides), but were replaced by an addition of more than four times that many aides systemwide (2,464.). School budgets showed 1,018.7 more educational support staff, but 617 of those positions were simply rebudgeted from sub-district offices. These staff are itinerants, serving multiple schools each week; in the past, they had been budgeted to sub-district offices and were now made directly responsible to the schools in which they had been working previously. Thus, the actual increase of support staff in the schools was just over 400.

This means that the average school has increased its staff under reform by about 7.5 staff, four of whom are likely to be aides. One of the new staff is likely to be a classroom teacher and one is providing educational support. One is likely to be a clerk in the school office.

Table 4

STAFFING CHANGES OVER FOUR YEARS
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FY 1989 to FY 1992

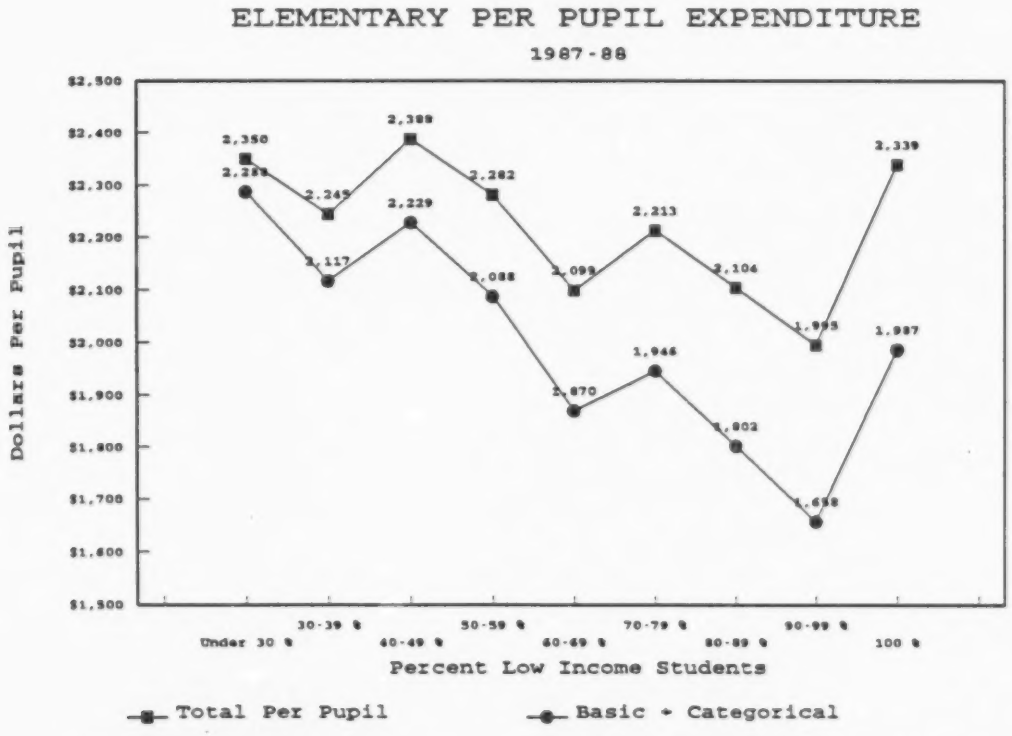
Fiscal Year: / Enrollment:	1989 406,372	1990 + 404,409	1991 407,850	1992 408,462	Change 1989–92	% Change 1988–92	Change 1991–92
POSITION TYPE							
SYSTEMWIDE							
STUDENT CONTACT							
Teachers	22,312.8	21,984.3	22,727.3	22,981.7	668.9	3.0%	254.4
Ed'l Support Tchrs	2,609.5	2,633.6	3,014.8	3,061.9	452.4	17.3%	47.1
Aides	3,862.0	4,246.0	5,150.8	5,777.6	1,915.6	49.6%	626.8
ADMINISTRATION							
Administrators	1,527.4	1,554.0	1,465.3	1,464.7	(62.7)	-4.1%	(0.6)
Profess'l/Tech'l	379.5	379.4	377.5	305.2	(74.3)	-19.6%	(72.3)
OPERATIVES							
Clerks/Lunchroom	7,115.7	6,860.1	6,586.8	6,786.1	(329.6)	-4.6%	199.3
Mainten/Operatives	4,525.0	4,506.8	4,687.9	4,483.0	(42.0)	-0.9%	(204.9)
GRAND TOTAL	42,331.9	42,164.2	44,010.4	44,860.2	2,528.3	6.0%	849.8
SCHOOLS							
STUDENT CONTACT							
Teachers	22,295.8	21,922.7	22,662.3	22,915.7	619.9	2.8%	253.4
Ed'l Support Tchrs	1,537.9	1,530.2	2,525.5	2,555.6	1,017.7 *	66.2%	30.1
Aides	3,797.0	4,113.2	5,014.8	5,650.6	1,853.6	48.8%	635.8
ADMINISTRATION							
Administrators	764.7	765.8	785.0	820.6	55.9	7.3%	35.6
Profess'l/Tech'l	33.0	34.7	71.5	36.0	3.0	9.1%	(35.5)
OPERATIVES							
Clerks/Lunchroom	5,187.8	5,174.2	5,414.8	5,734.7	546.9	10.5%	319.9
Mainten/Operatives	3,835.0	3,822.1	3,904.9	3,720.0	(115.0)	-3.0%	(184.9)
TOTAL	37,451.2	37,363.0	40,378.8	41,433.2	3,982.0	10.6%	1,054.4
ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS							
STUDENT CONTACT							
Teachers	17.0	61.5	65.0	66.0	49.0	288.2%	1.0
Ed'l Support Tchrs	1,071.6	1,103.4	489.3	506.3	(565.3) *	-52.8%	17.0
Aides	65.0	132.8	136.0	127.0	62.0	95.4%	(9.0)
ADMINISTRATION							
Administrators	762.7	788.2	680.3	644.1	(118.6)	-15.6%	(36.2)
Profess'l/Tech'l	346.5	344.7	306.0	269.2	(77.3)	-22.3%	(36.8)
OPERATIVES							
Clerks/Lunchroom	1,927.9	1,685.8	1,172.0	1,051.4	(876.5)	-45.5%	(120.6)
Mainten/Operatives	690.0	684.7	783.0	763.0	73.0	10.6%	(20.0)
TOTAL	4,880.7	4,801.2	3,631.6	3,427.0	(1,453.7)	-29.8%	(204.6)
GRAND TOTAL	42,331.9	42,164.2	44,010.4	44,860.2	2,528.3	6.0%	849.8

2/27/92

\+ Prorated from Tentative Budget

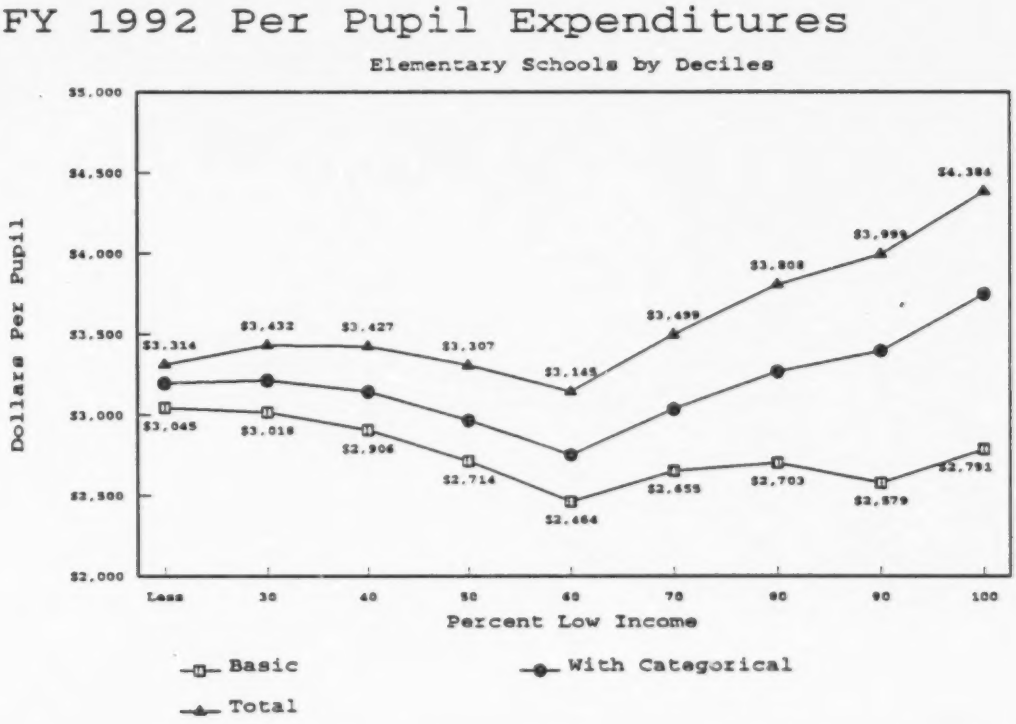
* Includes 617 itinerant staff rebudgeted to school level in FY 1991; real school increase was 401.7; real change in Admin Units was up 51.7; total decrease in Admin Units was 839.7.

The Chicago Reform Act also required that the resources of the school system be distributed more equitably among schools than it had been in 1988. The Chicago School Finance Authority is charged "To ensure the equitable distribution among the schools and programs of funds budgeted by the Board..."(P.L. 85-1418, Sec. 34A-412 [a] [8]). This provision was included in the reform act to correct the inequitable distribution of funds to schools discovered by the Chicago Panel in 1988. During the 1987-88 school year, it was discovered that per pupil spending was $500 less in schools with between 90 and 99 percent low income enrollments than in schools with fewer than 30 percent low income students. In fact, per pupil spending decreased progressively as the proportion of low income students increased except that schools with 100 percent low income students, which received the bulk of desegregation, federal Chapter I, and other remedial programs had spending levels, on average, comparable to those with few economically disadvantaged students.



In an equitable distribution of school support, basic program support would be the same for all groups of schools (appearing on a graph as a straight line across the graph at the average basic support level). Special categorical programs which are designed to meet the special needs of qualifying students would be distributed on the basis of the enrollment of those students, and since economic disadvantage is a primary component in qualifying for many of those programs, would tend to increase progressively as the proportion of low income students increases (appearing on the graph as a line slanting upwards towards the right). Finally, State Chapter I funds, as they are phased out of providing basic programs

and into being supplemental discretionary funds, would provide a larger increment for schools with higher proportions of low income students (appearing as a line with an even steeper slant to the right).



As can be seen by the distribution of funds to elementary schools during the 1991-92 year, when 60 percent of the State Chapter I funds were made supplementary, the intended pattern of funding is beginning to appear. While the schools in groupings of less than 60 percent still receive higher than expected basic funding, from that point on, the funding pattern is as expected with schools with totally low income enrollments receiving more than $1,500 more per pupil over the basic funding. By comparison, schools with fewer than 30 percent low income students received, on average, just over $300 above their basic level funding from both categorical and State Chapter I sources.[12] Even with the remaining skew in the basic funding, schools with entirely low income enrollments have nearly $1,000 more in per pupil support than do those with few low income students.

It should be pointed out, as Table 5 shows, that two thirds of all Chicago elementary school pupils attend schools that have low income enrollments of higher than 80 percent.

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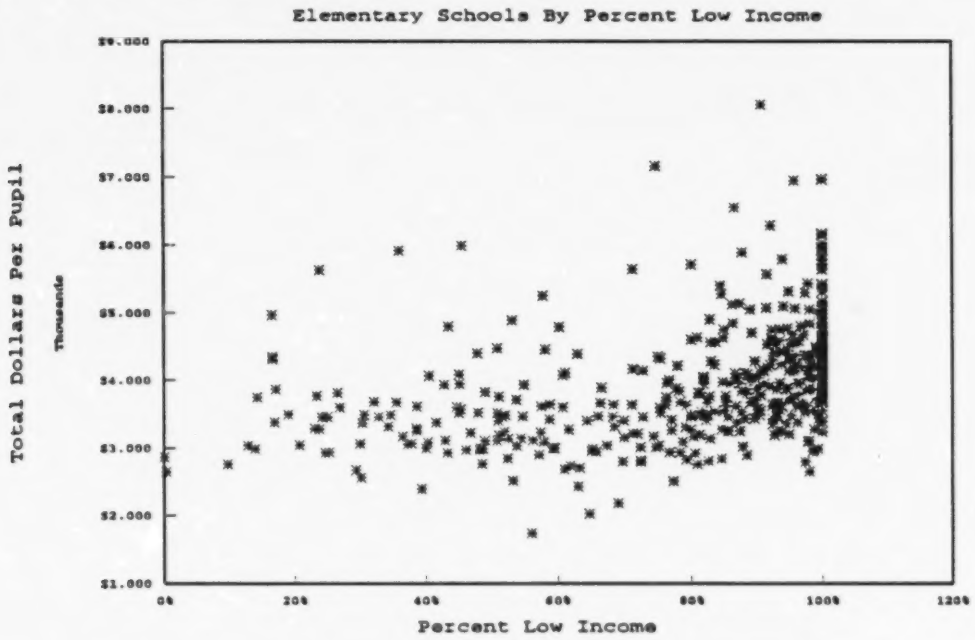
[12] The middle line on the FY 1992 graph (Basic plus Categorical) roughly corresponds to the lower line on the FY 1988 graph.



Only 17 percent of the city's elementary students attend the schools with less than 60 percent low income students. Thus, the skew in the lower end of the per pupil graph benefits relatively fewer students (just over 50,000) and costs relatively few extra dollars. As the reallocation of funds continues and basic program levels are equalized, even this skew should disappear.

It appears that the differences in basic level funding derive from two factors. The schools with fewer low income students are, on average, smaller schools. As Table 5 shows, the average size of the 24 schools with fewer than 30 percent low income students is only 433 students, quite small by Chicago standards. The average size of all elementary schools outside of Chicago is about 350 students. (One of the disadvantages Chicago's students face is that they must attend larger, and more anonymous, schools than do their counterparts across the rest of the state.) The average size of schools in the next two deciles of low income enrollments are 496 and 548. Only for the group of schools with between 50 and 59 percent low income, does the average school size approach the average school size across the system. Smaller schools tend to be slightly more expensive, per pupil, because staffing formulae and building costs are not quite so easily met. A second feature affecting higher basic costs in those schools on the lower end of the low income spectrum is the "hold harmless" feature of the school reform act. In order to force the Board to fund the reallocation of State Chapter I funds from reductions in administrative expenses and from new revenues, the law required that individual schools suffer no loss in per pupil support as a result of the reallocation (P.L. 85-1418, Sec. 18-8.5 [i] [1] [b]).

Table 5
CHAPTER I ALLOCATIONS
Chicago Elementary Schools

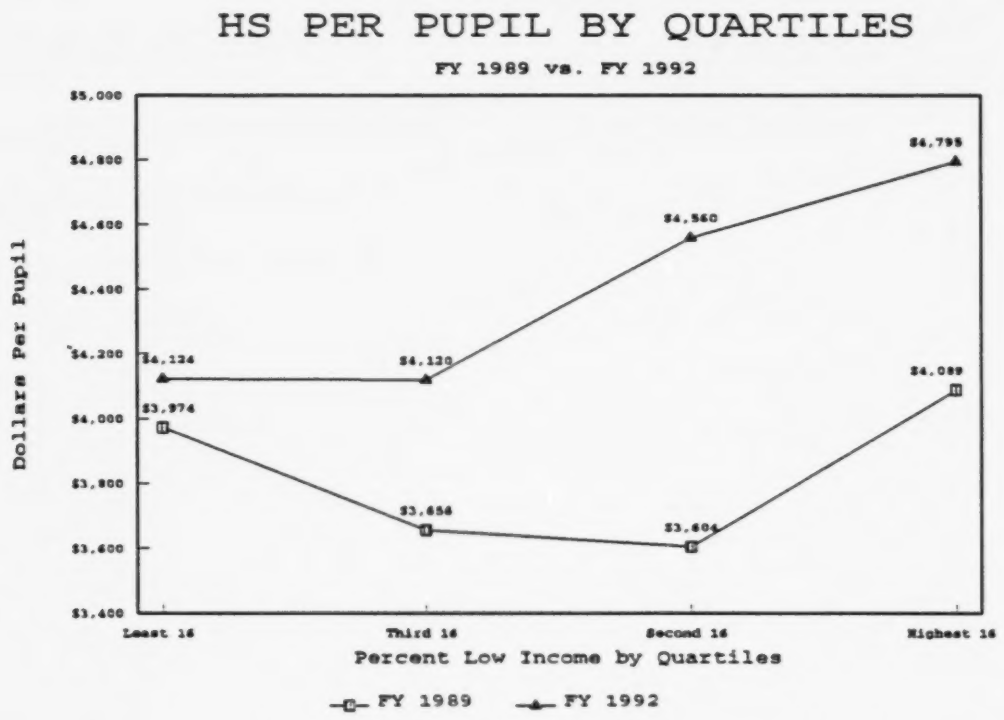
Range Low Income	Number Schools 1987–88	Average School Size	Students Enrolled Sept 87	Chapter I Students June 87	Percent Chapter I Students	Total Budget 1987–88	Chaper I Actual (– ProgSupt)	Total Per Pupil	Non–Chap I / Pupil
	1987–88 Chapter I Report								
Under 30 %	32	440	14,073	2,478	17.6%	33,069,377	874,288	2,350	2,288
30–39 %	24	498	11,960	4,312	36.1%	26,844,693	1,521,360	2,245	2,117
40–49 %	30	544	16,331	7,382	45.2%	39,005,094	2,604,517	2,388	2,229
50–59 %	31	688	21,337	11,770	55.2%	48,694,567	4,152,691	2,282	2,088
60–69 %	30	569	17,076	11,077	64.9%	35,844,530	3,908,187	2,099	1,870
70–79 %	34	704	23,934	18,123	75.7%	52,967,440	6,394,157	2,213	1,946
80–89 %	51	799	40,726	34,850	85.6%	85,698,979	12,295,777	2,104	1,802
90–99 %	112	831	93,033	88,929	95.6%	185,592,001	31,375,930	1,995	1,658
100 %	96	656	63,001	63,001	100.0%	147,380,656	22,228,013	2,339	1,987
Totals	440	685	301,471	241,922	80.2%	655,097,337	85,354,920	2,173	1,890

Range Low Income	Number Schools 1989–90	Average School Size	Students Enrolled Sept 89	Chapter I Students June 89	Percent Chapter I Students	Total Budget 1989–90	Chap I Entitled 1989–90	Total Per Pupil	Non–Chap I / Pupil
	1989–90 Chapter I Report								
Under 30%	38	438	16,652	3,098	18.6%	50,133,571	2,196,482	$3,011	2,879
30–39 %	20	516	10,313	3,493	33.9%	34,047,947	2,476,537	$3,301	3,061
40–49 %	30	631	18,915	8,446	44.7%	52,172,484	5,988,214	$2,758	2,442
50–59 %	31	613	19,017	10,469	55.1%	58,751,497	7,422,521	$3,089	2,699
60–69 %	26	692	17,981	11,657	64.8%	52,782,412	8,264,813	$2,935	2,476
70–79 %	49	686	33,635	25,497	75.8%	104,178,739	18,080,373	$3,097	2,560
80–89 %	58	762	44,173	37,564	85.0%	137,077,080	26,632,876	$3,103	2,500
90–99 %	118	747	88,155	83,323	94.5%	300,207,768	59,076,007	$3,405	2,735
100 %	61	654	39,870	39,870	100.0%	148,609,747	28,267,830	$3,727	3,018
Totals	431	670	288,711	223,417	77.4%	$937,961,245	$158,405,653	$3,249	2,700

Range Low Income	Number Schools 1990–91	Average School Size	Total Enrolled Sept 90	Chapt I Enrolled June 90	Percent Chapter I 1990–91	Total Budget 1990–91	Chapt I Entitled 1990–91	Total Per Pupil	Non–Chap I / Pupil
	1990–91 Chapter I Report								
Under 30%	32	433	13,868	2,700	19.5%	46,723,831	2,170,381	3,369	3,112
30 – 39%	23	525	12,064	4,234	35.1%	41,954,887	3,403,489	3,478	3,233
40 – 49%	27	550	14,860	6,732	45.3%	46,703,149	5,411,506	3,143	2,791
50 – 59%	33	628	20,709	11,444	55.3%	70,620,197	9,199,244	3,410	3,081
60 – 69%	23	664	15,276	9,906	64.8%	52,150,940	7,962,930	3,414	3,060
70 – 79%	39	679	26,471	19,858	75.0%	91,988,829	15,962,836	3,475	3,013
80 – 89%	76	685	52,063	44,446	85.4%	187,812,551	35,727,878	3,607	2,949
90 – 99%	144	755	108,732	102,793	94.5%	422,215,579	82,630,085	3,883	2,989
100 %	53	639	33,868	33,868	100.0%	139,522,394	27,224,767	4,120	3,141
Totals	450	662	297,911	235,981	79.2%	1,099,692,357	189,693,116	3,691	3,017

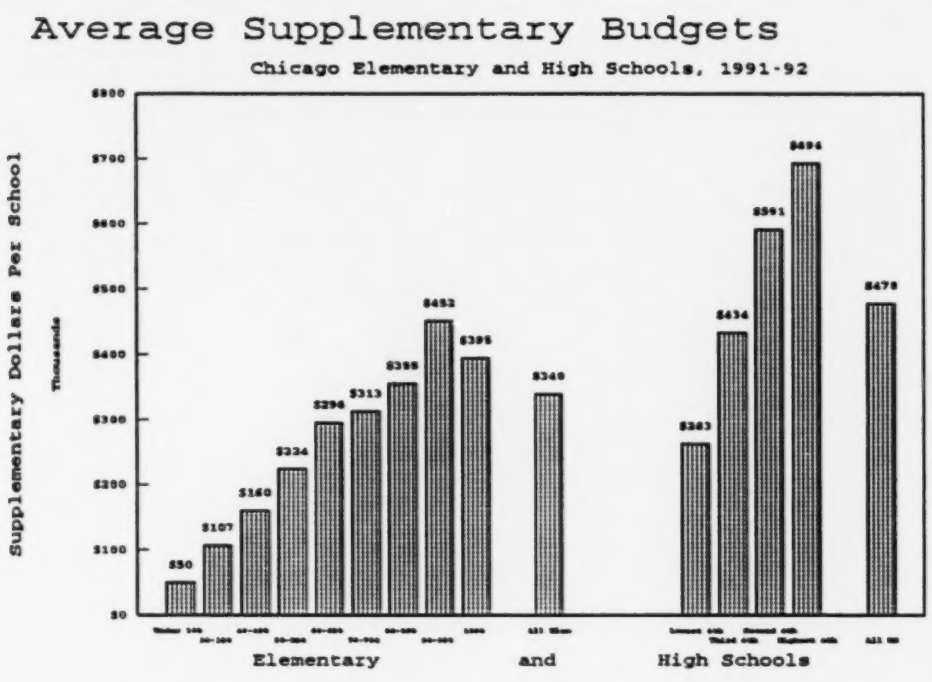
Range Low Income	Number Schools 1991–92	Average School Size	Total Enrolled Sept 91	Chapter I Enrolled June 91	Percent Chapter I 1991–92	Total Budget 1991–92	Chapter I Targeted 1991–92	Total Per Pupil	Non–Chap I / Pupil
	1991–92 Chapter I Report								
Under 30 %	24	433	10,390	1,930	18.6%	34,483,742	1,647,379	3,319	3,160
30 – 39 %	18	496	8,919	3,131	35.1%	31,443,275	2,672,519	3,525	3,226
40 – 49 %	24	548	13,153	5,952	45.3%	45,301,788	5,080,437	3,444	3,058
50 – 59 %	30	664	19,922	10,884	54.6%	67,189,126	9,290,240	3,373	2,906
60 – 69 %	25	706	17,644	11,468	65.0%	57,531,710	9,788,728	3,261	2,706
70 – 79 %	38	649	24,648	18,649	75.7%	85,939,119	15,918,206	3,487	2,841
80 – 89 %	76	664	50,432	43,014	85.3%	190,540,813	36,715,420	3,778	3,050
90 – 99 %	137	755	103,368	98,561	95.3%	411,315,922	84,128,651	3,979	3,165
100 %	82	635	52,087	52,087	100.0%	223,800,364	44,459,857	4,297	3,443
Totals	454	662	300,563	245,676	81.7%	1,147,545,859	209,701,437	3,818	3,120

In high schools, the picture is clouded by the relative inaccuracy of the low income measure through which State Chapter I funds are distributed: the free lunch count. Because high school students are more reluctant to sign up for a free lunch, only 48 percent of high school students were counted as low income, compared with 81.7 percent of elementary school students. Since it is highly unlikely that students' families become more affluent as the students enter ninth grade, the measure, itself, must be considered more dubious at the secondary level.



Still, as the accompanying graph shows, when schools are grouped into four sets by percent low income, a significant change has occurred in per pupil support, with schools with the most low income students reported receiving about $700 more per pupil in 1991-92 than schools in the lower two quartiles. As can be seen, the per pupil funding line has moved significantly towards the intended lower left to upper right slant, indicating schools with more disadvantaged students are receiving extra support.

The significance of this State Chapter I reallocation is that it has provided schools with significant new resources for their discretionary use. This report has already provided some indication of how this money has been used in some schools, and indicated the Panel's concern that too frequently it has simply been used to "add-on" programs without creating school-wide changes which will be experienced by every student. Still, the very amount of these discretionary funds is important to note. As the accompanying graph shows, the



average elementary school this year received $339,758 in supplementary funds. Schools with fewer low income students received less of these funds (about $50,000 for schools with less than 30 percent low income) while schools with more low income students received more ($451,761 for those with 90-99 percent low income students). The 100 percent low income schools averaged less because they averaged about 120 fewer students in total enrollments. At the high school level, the average supplemental funds were larger, because the schools were much larger. The average for all high schools was $478,493, with the highest quartile averaging $693,588. Clemente High School, a large high school predominantly serving low income Hispanic students, received the highest supplemental budget, $1,436,288. Six other high schools received more than $1 million in discretionary funds.

Thus, half way through the reform focus period, one of the goals of the reform act is clearly being met: that the fund of the school system should be reallocated so that funding between schools is more equitable, that schools with high proportions of low income students should have more resources, and that schools should have a significant amount of discretion in the programs they choose to provide.

E. Outside Resources Come to Chicago

One of the important, but frequently overlooked, benefits of the Chicago School Reform effort is the increased ease of access to Chicago schools for national efforts to

improve public education. Prior to reform, any researchers or program innovators who wished to work in or with a Chicago school had to receive prior approval from various levels of bureaucrats in the system's central administration. Only those with the best of local connections or with a direct invitation from the then reigning superintendent found it easy to gain access to Chicago schools. While some individual principals found ways to secure outside assistance, most labored in splendid isolation of school improvement efforts across the United States and national efforts by-passed the hassles of entry into the nation's third largest school system.

Since the enactment of the Chicago School Reform Act in 1988 there has been an unprecedented "march to Chicago" by leaders of national efforts to improve schools. Some quickly moved to seize the opportunities of negotiating directly with school principals instead of system bureaucrats. Others cooperated with State Board of Education initiatives to establish Chicago schools in their reform networks. Still others had to be wooed and enticed to reluctantly agree to add Chicago schools to those to whom they extended assistance and nurture.

Many of these programs, funded by foundations, corporations, the state and the city, involve networking with other schools in Illinois and around the country. As a result, communication and comparisons are facilitated between schools from various educational settings. Concurrently, news about the Chicago experiment is spreading to other schools across the nation through the implementation of these improvement initiatives. At the same time, Chicago school activists are learning they are not alone in trying to solve the nearly intractable problems of urban schools. Education experts from across the country, recognizing the potential in Chicago schools and in its efforts towards school-based governance, are committing their resources to help Chicago schools improve. Initially scattered in pilot sites, many of these initiatives are now becoming more systematic and comprehensive in the assistance they provide to cooperating schools. Some of these national efforts are as new as the Chicago reform effort, while others have a longer history.

Some of the more notable programs and projects now active in helping Chicago schools are the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Comer School Development Program, the Accelerated Schools Project, and Mortimer Adler's Paideia effort. In addition, the Chicago Board of Education launched its own school improvement effort, known as Project CANAL (Creating A New Approach to Learning), as the Chicago Reform Act was being debated and amended by the Illinois General Assembly. In addition to these programs, described below, several other national or more local efforts are also working in selected Chicago schools, including Reading Recovery, the SAGE School Mission Process, the Algebra Project, the Illinois Writing Project, and the introduction of Afro-centric curricula based on the Portland model. Reading Recovery is an intervention program, supported by staff at Ohio State University, targeted at under-achieving first graders. It involves intensive individual tutoring 30 minutes each day. Staff from 61 Chicago elementary schools (listed in Appendix A) have been trained in the program's techniques. The SAGE School Mission Process combines school staff brainstorming and computer analysis of school data and

proposals to identify major obstacles to achieving the articulated mission and goals of a school. With the assistance of SAGE facilitators, in part provided by nationwide support from Citibank, planning teams are formed to address each identified obstacle. There are now 13 Chicago schools utilizing the SAGE process.[13]

PAIDEIA

One of the earliest of the outside efforts to help improve individual Chicago schools was the Paideia Program, developed by prominent education reformer, Mortimer Adler. Adler established the Paideia Group, a distinguished association of 22 American educators who were concerned with the declining quality of public education. The program originated with Adler's 1982 publication, *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto*.

"Paideia" comes from the Greek word *paidos*, meaning "the upbringing of a child." The primary goals of the program are to prepare each student to earn a living, undertake the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, and become a life-long learner. The Paideia Program is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all school children.

To accomplish these three goals, the Paideia Program promotes a delivery system for teaching which includes didactic instruction (or lecturing), coaching, and Socratic seminars. This three "column" teaching method corresponds to the three ways the mind can be improved: by the acquisition of organized knowledge; by the development of intellectual skills; and by the enlargement of understanding, insight and aesthetic appreciation. The Paideia program claims to be a concept, not a prepared curriculum; there is no one program to buy or implement. It is not a "quick-fix" and must be viewed as a long-term investment. The Paideia Program began in two Chicago high schools (Austin and Sullivan) and two elementary schools connected to these high schools during the mid-1980s.

The Socratic seminar is a key component of the program. It requires active participation and interaction between the students and teachers and relies on the use of primary source materials as the focus of the seminar reading. For example, instead of reading a history textbook chapter *about* the Declaration of Independence, the student and teacher read *the* Declaration of Independence and the seminar discussion is focused on the actual text of the document. In a manner adopted from that of the classic philosopher, Socrates, a Paideia class will sit in a circle facing each other. In the seminar, the teacher assumes the role of facilitator, a crucial part of the Paideia concept. The facilitator

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[13] Each of the programs listed in this section of this report have been more fully described, both in their national design and in implementation in individual Chicago schools in the 1991-92 monthly issues of *Reform Report*, a newsletter for Local School Council members published by the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance.

stimulates student discussion by posing a general question to students at the onset of the seminar. The teacher does not lecture or ask questions about basic facts, nor is the teacher equipped with predetermined "right" and "wrong" answers quoted from a teacher's guide. The seminar is designed to enhance the critical thinking and reflection of the participating students.

Seminars are usually held once a week, and the seminar material is integrated with the curriculum. Seminar length and frequency vary across the grade levels and according to students' ages and developmental needs. Because seminar classes are heterogeneously grouped, students with different reading abilities are assisted through peer coaching, taped material, and resource teachers. The required course of study consists of language, literature, fine arts, mathematics, natural sciences, history, geography and social studies. Elective classes are limited to four auxiliary subjects, including physical education and a second language.

Chicago now has 10 Paideia schools, including three high schools and seven middle or elementary schools (See Appendix A for a list of schools in each of the described improvement networks). Faculty members from the original four schools underwent intensive summer training for eight weeks at St. John's College. Currently, staff development opportunities are provided in Chicago through The Paideia Institute of Hyde Park, a non-profit organization with links to the University of Illinois at Urbana. The Institute's director, Dr. Robert D. Brazil, is the principal of Sullivan High School, one of the three participating secondary schools. The Institute for Philosophical Research, whose director, Mortimer Adler, created the Paideia Project, also provides support to participating Chicago schools.

Project CANAL

The Creating A New Approach to Learning (CANAL) Project was designed to alleviate the educational inequities that have affected the academic achievement of Chicago students who are enrolled in selected racially identifiable schools. It began in the fall of 1988 as part of the Board of Education's desegregation effort. The project's objective is to have a minimum of 50 percent of students in each participating school performing at or above grade level in reading and mathematics within five years of initial implementation. Funds to support Project CANAL have been provided by the federal government in settlement of a suit brought by the Chicago Public Schools.

Principals, teachers, school staff, parents, and, when feasible, students in participating schools have attended training sessions at a newly established CANAL training center and at local school sites. The instructional staff has been the primary focus of most CANAL training. The training was designed to identify institutional and managerial strategies which have had a positive effect in other racially identifiable schools. To avoid disrupting a participating school's instructional program, a cadre of substitute teachers has traveled from

school to school, maintaining classroom instruction while the regular school staff is being trained. This class coverage model was adapted from the staff development effort associated with Pittsburgh's Schenley Teacher Training Center. The staff development program was designed to improve the instructional and managerial abilities of teachers and principals. The parents' training program informed parents of local and systemwide school improvement objectives, and attempted to motivate them to become partners in increasing their children's academic achievement. The student training program acquainted them with existing student council structures to enable them to share in the decision-making processes and provide input into the development of programs that would address their needs.

The program has expanded from 40 to 70 schools. In the Panel's study of 14 representative schools, two of the three schools with the most extensive initial plans for improving classroom instruction were participating in Project CANAL. The Monitoring Commission for Desegregation Implementation reports annually on the use of funds granted under the Settlement Agreement. An evaluation study has been undertaken, but not yet completed, to identify program effectiveness in the area of student achievement.

The Coalition of Essential Schools

Ted Sizer of Brown University founded the Coalition of Essential Schools in 1984. The Essential Schools philosophy involves nine commonly held principles concerning school focus and goals, the role of the student and staff, and the school's attitude toward learning (See Appendix B). The Coalition, which works mainly with high schools, claims that there is no specific blueprint for a good school; each one has its own set of circumstances, strengths and weaknesses. However, effective schools share guiding principles that are widely accepted by the individual school community. A unique feature of the program requires graduating students to present an exhibition as the culmination of each student's work in school. To join the coalition, a super majority of the faculty of a school must vote in favor of participation. Eleven Chicago high schools are now part of the Coalition of Essential Schools network.

The Coalition has formed a unique partnership with the Education Commission of the States (ECS) called Re:Learning. Founded in 1965, ECS is a non-profit, interstate organization formed to help governors, state legislators, state education officials and others develop policies to improve education. Re:Learning is based upon the Coalition's nine common principles and utilizes the policy expertise of ECS in order to improve education from the "schoolhouse to the statehouse." The "re-learning" process is designed to restructure school systems entirely.

In 1988, the Illinois Governor's Office, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Board of Higher Education, and representatives from major professional educational organizations founded the Illinois Alliance of Essential Schools (IAES). The Alliance is the operating arm of the Illinois Re:Learning project. It helps member schools explore the

Essential School principles, as well as gain support of all entities from the "schoolhouse to the statehouse." The IAES provides an outside facilitator, called a "critical friend" or "coach", to help schools restructure. The goal of IAES is to define a state school system that makes critical decisions with bureaucratic and political interests subservient to student learning; a system in which administrators and policy makers encourage and support changes which will improve learning for all students; and a system with incentives, rewards, and sanctions that encourage teachers and principals to perform their jobs professionally.

One of the Chicago Coalition schools is Steinmetz High School which began its effort to become a Coalition school in 1990 when it received a planning grant from IAES. Needing 75 percent staff approval to join the Illinois Alliance, Steinmetz's principal and a team of teachers worked all summer to build the required consensus. The principal felt an intensive effort would be required because of the doubt teachers feel about new improvement initiatives, especially when they have seen so many come and go. One goal of the essential schools coalition is educating teachers and helping them see their potential role in educational change. Teachers who adopt the Essential school model are committing to an ongoing teacher education effort in their school.

In the first year, Steinmetz, like other Chicago high schools, received funding for its planning process directly from the MacArthur Foundation, through IAES. In 1991-92, the private foundation's contribution had to go through the Board of Education and is being delivered to the school in installments, reducing the school's flexibility in how it could use the funds.

With the help of its assigned "critical friend" or "coach" the faculty at Steinmetz is trying to institute new ideas and teaching methods such as co-teaching certain courses and coordinating curriculum between subject areas. The school's largest accomplishment to date is changing it time schedule to foster collaborative teacher planning. Students are now scheduled for classes during the first eight periods of each day, with one ninth period group counselling session per week. By restructuring the class schedule, Steinmetz teachers now have the last period of most days free for joint lesson planning or to attend school meetings. In addition, teachers have attended more staff development conferences and meet in committees more often. This additional planning time has allowed the faculty to analyze the school mission and to consider what qualities a Steinmetz graduate should have. The Coalition believes such an approach forces the whole school community to really think about why they are there and what they want to accomplish.

In light of the unique difficulties of Chicago's urban conditions, the State Board expanded the Coalition's secondary school focus to include the feeder elementary schools of Chicago's 11 Coalition high schools. Chicago is the first large urban center to have both its own network of Essential Schools and a system to connect high schools with elementary schools. To that end, the Illinois State Board of Education has linked Re:Learning with two other successful programs: the Accelerated Schools Project and its own Urban Education Partnership Program.

The Accelerated Schools Project

The Accelerated Schools Project tries to combat the traditional notions of remedial education programs. The Accelerated Project contends that a successful program creates learning activities which are characterized by high expectations for students, not by low ones typical of most current remedial programs. It sets a deadline for closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more successful counterparts, so that all children may benefit from mainstream instruction by the time they enter high school. For low achievers, the program promotes faster paced programs that actively engage student motivation. It also requires parental involvement, use of community resources, and extensive teacher participation in designing interventions.

Henry M. Levin, the founder of the program, is a professor of education at Stanford University. His goal for an elementary level accelerated school is to enable all students to take advantage of mainstream secondary education instruction by effectively closing the achievement gap in elementary school. The three guiding principles of an Accelerated School are to establish a unity of purpose on which the school community will focus, to empower key participants to make important educational decisions and take responsibility for them, and to build school strength to use all of the learning resources that students, parents, school staff and communities bring to the educational endeavor. Curricular, instructional and organizational practices must be transformed to be consistent with the school's individual vision of its future.

The Accelerated Project requires a school to examine its current situation, and compare that position to an established vision for the future. The school then decides on several priorities that will bring it closer to its vision. Cadres or work-groups are formed to find solutions within problem areas. This process is compatible with the school improvement planning process required under the Chicago School Reform Act. Four Chicago elementary schools (Jefferson, Revere, Pope, and Suder) now participate in a Chicago Network of Accelerated Schools. These schools are also part of the Illinois Network of Accelerated Schools. With the other participating schools across the state, their faculties received special training from Professor Levin's staff and they receive special assistance from staff at the State Board of Education.

Additional schools applying to be part of the Illinois Network of Accelerated Schools will be accepted into the state's "Rising to the Challenge" initiative. The State Board of Education has designed this program to incorporate many of the same accelerated principles, but it goes further to incorporate coordination of social and health services. The original 25 Illinois Accelerated Schools and the 13 new "Rising to the Challenge" schools will receive state-sponsored training both together and individually. Six Chicago schools began "Rising to the Challenge in 1991: Farren, Locke, Lovett, Park Manor, and Smyser Elementary Schools, and Sayre Language Academy.

The original 25 schools in the statewide network had some common characteristics: many minority and/or bilingual students, high mobility rate in and out of the school attendance area, high levels of poverty, and low scholastic achievement. These schools primarily enrolled at risk students.

The four Chicago Accelerated Schools have attended periodic conferences with the 21 other Illinois Accelerated Schools. The relationships they have formed with the 21 other Illinois schools are an important aspect of being an Accelerated School. A state level Steering Committee has been comprised of one representative from each of the 25 schools in the program. The required meetings and training sessions allowed for exchange of ideas, and discussion of common problems. Schools from different parts of the state have visited each other to gain ideas and inspiration for their own efforts.

Revere Elementary School on the southside began the Accelerated program at the same time school reform was beginning. The school's principal believes that this made implementation of each effort harder. While the principles behind the Chicago reforms and the Accelerated Schools are similar, establishing the two efforts simultaneously took time and patience. Revere staff and parents devised a vision of where they wanted their school to be and an assessment of where it was as they began the planning process. As a result of their analysis, they established four priority arenas: improving school pride and self-esteem, increasing parental involvement, changing the curriculum, and raising academic achievement. "Cadres" were formed in each arena to identify ways to help the school reach its vision. Implementation of the plans created by these cadres is just beginning.

The Comer School Development Program

The Comer School Development Program (SDP) is a comprehensive school plan which incorporates child development theories, collaborative relationships, and a cooperative school climate based on trust. The SDP originated from the work of James P. Comer, a Yale University child psychologist and director of the Yale Child Study Center. If children are to learn, schools must identify child development needs and fulfill them, Comer contends.

Comer believes schools serving poor and minority groups have greater difficulty building trust and supportive relationships. Creating a School Development Plan, then, is a pivotal part of the Comer process. It allows parents and school staff to collaborate as decision-makers in developing policies, procedures, and programs that affect the academic and social climate of the school. Under SDP, school improvement plans should incorporate mental health principles of child growth and development and address children's cognitive, social, psychological, and moral development while trying to help them evolve into more productive members of society. The ultimate goal of the Comer program is to foster more positive attitudes and behaviors among parents, the school and the children.

The Comer process involves three teams: the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT), the Mental Health Team (MHT), and the Parent Program (PP). In Chicago, the Local School Council was worked into this program structure. Local School Councils at Comer schools continue to govern and set policy and integrate their responsibilities with other bodies within the model. The management team and the LSC are separate, but their membership overlaps. The management team has been called the "workhorse" of the LSC. The overlapping membership is thought to be useful in that many issues addressed by the LSC have been considered previously by the management team.

According to Comer, the most unique part of the program is the Mental Health Team. Comer recognized that prevention of problems and early intervention to solve those that do arise lead to the most effective and enduring results. The Mental Health Team, a network of staff representing all social and health services available at the school, incorporates mental health principles into school governance and activities. The team approach is used to ensure that health professionals meet all of the children's developmental needs, not just those falling within each specialty.

The Chicago version of the Comer process has been initiated in four elementary schools (Brown, Dodge, Jefferson, and Riis) and involves many social service, philanthropic and educational organizations. The program is coordinated by Youth Guidance, a private Chicago social service agency whose mission is to help disadvantaged inner-city youth become responsible, productive adults. Full endorsement and support are provided by the Yale Child Study Center. DePaul University's Center for Urban Education provides curriculum support for the participating schools with an emphasis on staff development. A team of Northwestern University researchers from sociology, psychology, and African-American studies is evaluating the program.

The Comer program in Chicago is fully funded by private sources. Principal funding for the three-year implementation period is provided by Kraft General Foods. Citibank, The Chicago Community Trust, and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation have also committed funds to the program.

Already in four schools, with four more to be identified in 1992 and six in 1993, the Comer model claims to be a unique comprehensive approach to education. Schools to be selected enroll "at-risk" populations characterized by low-income, minority populations, low achievement, and unstable family situations. Yale Child Study Center representatives worked with Youth Guidance in identifying the schools to be included in the project.

The project's Steering Committee coordinates efforts and monitors the Comer schools. Its purpose is to recognize each school's maximum opportunities, including both academic and social potential. It is responsible for resource development, monitoring, program implementation, and problem solving. In Chicago, the Steering Committee includes the Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools, Dr. Comer, an elementary school District Superintendent, the Executive Director of Youth Guidance, the President of the

Chicago Teachers' Union, representatives of the major funders, the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Northwestern University research staff, DePaul University staff, and the principals, teachers, parents, and community members from the Comer schools.

F. The Students -- Still Too Early To Tell

The ultimate goals of the Chicago School Reform Act are to improve the level of achievement of the city's school children. There is an emerging debate in this country about how best to assess student achievement. Some focus on test scores. Others add additional criteria which can also be easily quantified, such as attendance rates, graduation rates, truancy rates, discipline problems, etc. Still others suggest that these measures frequently miss important areas of student capabilities and so look to the development of more qualitative assessments of student attainment such as portfolios and other performance evaluations. These latter efforts are still quite experimental and in the early development stage. The Chicago School Reform Act, for better or worse, focuses more narrowly on quantifiable achievement gains.

After a decade and a half of enrollment declines, partly tracking changes in demographic trends, partly the result of teacher strike disruptions, enrollment has now stabilized in the Chicago Public Schools. Total enrollments have been in the vicinity of 405,000 students since the 1988-89 school year.

Longitudinal cohort dropout rates continue to vary from year to year, mostly reflecting different promotion and high school entrance policies when the individual class was completing elementary school. Recent rates (Chicago Public Schools, 1991:3) have been:

1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
40%	45%	41%	40%	40%	48%	46%

It is unlikely that dropout rates will decline significantly during the initial five year reform implementation effort. In a recent study, the Chicago Panel showed that dropout rates reflect early experiences in school. On the basis of academic grades and attendance records for second, third, and fourth grades, it was possible to identify, with nearly 90 percent accuracy, which students would eventually graduate from high school and which would drop out (Hess, Lyons, & Corsino, 1989). It will be eight years before the fourth graders now experiencing some changes due to reform efforts reach graduation age. Thus, reform implementation is unlikely to significantly affect the dropout rate (or obversely, the graduation rate) in the immediate future.

When attendance data for the last six years were analyzed, there was very little change found for the system's elementary schools. At the high school level, attendance records show a steady decline, due at least in part to more stringent record keeping procedures which translate cut classes into half day absences. To date, citywide attendance rates have not shown any improvement, although some individual schools have made progress in this area.

The Chicago Panel has designed and initiated a major study of changes in student test scores among the city's students. The study is designed to show whether student achievement gains from year to year increase after reform implementation was begun. Scores for individual students for several baseline years will be compared with scores during each of the five years of primary reform implementation. Trends in yearly score gains will be carefully analyzed, first for each individual and then, in aggregate, at the school level. Greater increases in later years would indicate student achievement is improving. Results from such studies will not be either available or relevant until the end of the five year reform implementation period.

Median test score results have shown little change during the first two years of reform. On the Illinois Goals Assessment Program tests for 1990-91, 77 percent of all elementary schools fell below state averages; for 11th grade reading and math, 92 percent were below the state average. Since current year test scores depend upon the foundations developed in previous years, it would not be expected to see big gains in median test scores from one year to the next. It may be that even five years would be too soon to see significant changes. One would expect to see improvement in the early years more quickly, but 1991 third grade scores declined slightly from the previous year. Still individual year scores tend to vary widely as cohorts of students vary. It is for this reason that the Panel's study will be seeking to track the same children from year to year over a prolonged period.

F. The Midway Report Summary

As the Chicago reform implementation effort reached its mid-point, it would be fair to say that it has not yet had a significant impact upon student learning. Under the best of circumstances, it would be too early to have expected much significant change. The first year of implementation was a planning and training year. Second year tests were taken eight months into the first year of implementation. That is not much time for major change to have occurred, even if school plans had been quite radical. But, as noted above, school improvement planning at most schools has not been very radical.

What has happened is that the basic mechanisms designed in the reform act have been put in place. Local School Councils are now in their second two year term. In general, these councils seem to be working quite successfully at most schools, though it is clear there are some for which this is not the case. LSCs have learned how to govern the schools without getting caught up in day to day managerial issues. Some have claimed more

power, others less. Principals have been selected for all schools, and two out of five have new educational leadership. Principals are developing skills to assume the new roles required under school based management. Teachers, though largely ignored in the initial training and implementation efforts, have taken increasingly involved roles in planning for school improvement, but do not see reform requiring much change in their basic classroom practices. School Improvement Plans have attacked serious problems in most schools, but in only about a quarter are they likely to significantly alter the way students encounter schools. Thus, a foundation for change has been established. But major changes are still over the horizon. The challenge facing Chicago at the midway point in its reform implementation is to bring those major changes into the daily life of the city's schools.

Appendix
Schools Involved in Major School Improvement Networks

Paideia Schools

Park Manor Elementary School
Gregory Elementary School
Albany Park Multicultural Academy
Dvorak Elementary School
DuBois Elementary School
Burroughs Elementary School
DePriest Elementary School

Manley High School
Phillips High School
Sullivan High School

Project CANAL Schools

Bass Elementary School
Beethoven Elementary School
Bennett Elementary School
Bradwell Elementary School
Byford Elementary School
Carpenter Elementary School
Carter Elementary School
Clark Middle School
Cooper Primary and Intermediate School
DePriest Elementary School
Dett Elementary School
Dubois Elementary School
Dumas Elementary School
Dyett Middle School
Einstein Elementary School
Farren Elementary School
Fernwood Elementary School
Frazier Elementary School
Gale Community Academy
Goethe Elementary School
Goldblatt Elementary School
Gregory Elementary School
Guggenheim Elementary School
Hammond Elementary School
Hefferan Elementary School
Holmes Elementary School
Howe Elementary School
Hughes Elementary School
Johnson Elementary School
Jungman Elementary School
Lafayette Elementary School
Lowell Elementary School
Manierre Elementary School
Marin Primary Center
Mayo Elementary School
Madero Elementary School
McCormick Elementary School
Medill Primary School
Mollison Elementary School
Moos Elementary School
Nash Elementary School
Penn Elementary School
Perry Elementary School
Piccolo Elementary School
Piccolo Middle School
Prescott Elementary School
Ryerson Elementary School
Schiller Elementary School
Sherman Elementary School
Spencer Elementary School
Spry Elementary School
Stowe Elementary School
Sumner Community Academy
Terrell Elementary School
Van Vlissingen Elementary School
Von Humboldt Elementary School
Williams Elementary School
Woodson North Elementary School
Woodson South Elementary School

Carver Area High School
DuSable High School
Harper High School
Hearst High School
Kelvyn Park High School
Manley High School
Orr Community Academy High School
Phillips High School
Robeson High School
Wells Community Academy High School
Westinghouse Vocational High School

The Coalition of Essential Schools

Calumet High School
Chicago Vocational High School
DuSable High School
Englewood High School
Flower Vocational High School
Lindblom Technical High School
Mather High School
Phillips High School
Robeson High School
Steinmetz High School
Sullivan High School

The Accelerated Schools Project

Jefferson Elementary School
Paul Revere Elementary School
Pope Elementary School
Suder Elementary School

The Comer Schools

Brown Elementary School
Dodge Elementary School
Jefferson Elementary School
Riis Elementary School

SAGE School Mission Process Schools

Andersen Elementary School
Brenneman Elementary School
Funston Elementary School
Hope Community Academy
Locke Elementary School
Melody Elementary School
Mitchell Elementary School
Overton Elementary School
Paderewski Elementary School
Park Manor Elementary School
Ross Elementary School
Suder Elemenary School

Corliss High School

Reading Recovery Schools

1991 Schools
Biedler Elementary School
Brenan Elementary School
Cameron Elementary School
Columbus Elementary School
Darwin Elementary School
Dumas Elementary School
Ericson Scholastic Academy
Fernwood Elementary School
Goudy Elementary School
Henderson Elementary School
Howe Elementary School
Metcalfe Magnet Elementary School
Park Manor Elementary School
Ruiz Elementary School
Sheridan Elementary School
Stewart Elementary School
Swift Elementary School
Talcott Elementary School
Thorp Elementary School
Von Humboldt Elementary School
Walsh Elementary School

1990 Schools
Andersen Elementary School
Byrd Community Academy
Donoghue Elementary School
DuBois Elementary School
Greene Elementary School
Gresham Elementary School
Hendricks Community Academy
Holmes Elementary School
Jenner Elementary School
Johnson Elementary School
Lathrop Elementary School
Marin Primary Center
McCormick Elementary School
Medill Primary School
Ninos Heroes Community Academy
Otis Elementary School
Raymond Elementary School
Revere Elementary School
Ross Elementary School
Ryerson Elementary School
Scanlan Elementary School
Van Vlissingen Elementary School
Woodson South Elementary School

1989 Schools
Chopin Elementary School
Frazier Elementary School
Funston Elementary School
Goethe Elementary School
Goldblatt Elementary School
Goodlow Magnet Elementary School
Hinton Elementary School
Hughes Elementary School
Melody Elementary School
Mozart Elementary School
Nash Elementary School
Taylor Elementary School
Williams Elementary School

1988 Schools
Gregory Elementary School*
Hamline Elementary School
Seward Elementary School
Sumner Math and Science Academy*

* Discontinued Reading Recovery after the initial three-year program.

APPENDIX B
The Coalition of Essential Schools -- The Common Principles

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents learn to use their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be "comprehensive" if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.

2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than necessarily by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "Less Is More" should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort merely to cover content.

3. The school's goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of adolescents.

4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than 80 students. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.

5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher - as - deliverer - of - instructional – services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.

6. Students entering secondary school studies are those who can show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high school age but not yet at appropriate levels of competence to enter secondary school studies will be provided intensive remedial work to assist them quickly to meet these standards. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation f an "Exhibition." This Exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school's program may be jointly administered by the faculty and by higher authorities. As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of "credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.

7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.

8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of eighty or fewer pupils, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.
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